



MILLS COLLEGE
LIBRARY



THE DISSENTING OPINIONS
OF MR. WESTBROOK PEGLER

THE
DISSENTING
OPINIONS
OF
MISTER
WESTBROOK
PEGLER

New York
Charles Scribner's Sons
1938

Mills College Library
Withdrawn



COPYRIGHT, 1938, BY
WESTBROOK PEGLER

Copyright, 1925-33, by the Chicago Tribune
Copyright, 1933-38, by the New York World-Telegram

Printed in the United States of America

*All rights reserved. No part of this book
may be reproduced in any form without
the permission of Charles Scribner's Sons*

A

*The publishers wish to acknowledge
the courtesy of the Chicago Tribune
and the New York World-Tele-
gram for permission to reprint in
this volume selections taken from
their columns.*



Contents

<i>Myriad-Minded Us</i>	1
<i>Poker Game</i>	5
<i>Disney</i>	9
<i>The National Garret</i>	13
<i>Six-Day Race</i>	17
<i>"To Three Cups of Flour, Add——"</i>	21
<i>Spelvin Against Spelvin</i>	25
<i>"Ayak?"—"Akia"</i>	29
<i>Drunkards' Pensions</i>	33
<i>Golden Spoon</i>	37
<i>So This Is Scotland Yard</i>	41
<i>The Versailles Tragedy</i>	46
<i>White Tie and Tails</i>	50
<i>In Reply to Mr. Farley</i>	54
<i>Sick Town</i>	58
<i>Feelthy Peectures</i>	62
<i>Submarginal Minds</i>	66

<i>Punchy Politicians</i>	70
<i>Broke</i>	74
<i>Trying on a Shoe</i>	78
<i>Trees</i>	82
<i>Senatorial Courtesy</i>	86
<i>That Man Is Here Again</i>	90
<i>On Capital Gains</i>	94
<i>The Last Frontier</i>	98
<i>Ah! Mystery of Love!</i>	102
<i>George Spelvin on Housing</i>	105
<i>Newspaper Stuff I</i>	109
<i>Newspaper Stuff II</i>	113
<i>Newspaper Stuff III</i>	117
<i>To the Ladies</i>	121
<i>To Set the Record Straight</i>	125
<i>Ex Marks the Spot</i>	129
<i>Zone of Quiet</i>	132
<i>Pot and Kettle</i>	136
<i>Missionary Workers</i>	139
<i>Essay on Finance</i>	143
<i>George Spelvin Thinks as Follows</i>	146
<i>Rough Riding</i>	150
<i>Picture Hokum</i>	154

<i>Puny Thunder</i>	158
<i>Hotel Moochery</i>	162
<i>Those Were the Days</i>	166
<i>Too Much Territory</i>	170
<i>For Ways That Are Dark</i>	174
<i>Change of Pace</i>	178
<i>George Spelvin Thinks Further</i>	182
<i>Dingbats</i>	186
<i>Yah! Guadalajara!</i>	190
<i>The Manly Arts</i>	194
<i>Include Me Out</i>	198
<i>Accolade</i>	202
<i>The Captain Who Blighted My Life</i>	206
<i>Hangover</i>	210
<i>Spelvin's Income Tax</i>	214
<i>Doubledome Babbitts</i>	217
<i>Glamorous Hollywood</i>	220
<i>Good Pitch; No Catch</i>	224
<i>Old Siwash, New Chicago</i>	228
<i>Red-Baiting</i>	232
<i>Excelsior, Minn. I</i>	236
<i>Excelsior, Minn. II</i>	240
<i>Night Out</i>	243

<i>By Me</i>	247
<i>Heartburn</i>	251
<i>Bold Jerry O'Connell</i>	256
<i>Full Crew</i>	260
<i>Cumshaw</i>	264
<i>The Devil's Work</i>	268
<i>For Argument's Sake</i>	272
<i>In Sickness and in Health Until Further Notice</i>	276
<i>When to Shoot</i>	280
<i>Hugo Bloh's Job-Trust</i>	284
<i>I Never Knew——</i>	288
<i>Bashful James</i>	292
<i>Lament</i>	296
<i>Spirit of Chicago</i>	300
<i>Six of One, Half Dozen of the Other</i>	304
<i>Cook Sprained Thumb; Wildflowers; Day Off; None Dead</i>	308
<i>Farewell to Mencken (1936)</i>	312
<i>Listen Who's Talking</i>	316
<i>Hors d'Œuvres</i>	319
<i>That's How Spelvin Was Born</i>	323
<i>Dear Sir—You Cur</i>	326
<i>Success</i>	330

**THE DISSENTING OPINIONS
OF MR. WESTBROOK PEGLER**

Myriad-Minded Us

OF ALL THE fantastic fog-shapes that have risen off the swamp of confusion since the big war, the most futile and, at the same time, the most pretentious, is the deep-thinking, hair-trigger columnist or commentator who knows all the answers just offhand and can settle great affairs with absolute finality three days or even six days a week.

Being one of these myself, I have been trying to figure out how we came to be. Some, I know, have been pontificating for twenty years and have come to regard themselves as intellectual landmarks and American institutions as permanent as Baseball.

But I am one of the green crop, come after the panic, and my confidence in the vast public importance of my opinions, to say nothing of their sanity, has not become a fixed habit.

It takes gall to sit down to a typewriter at a certain hour every afternoon to confront a long mile of white paper and presume to tell the people what it is all about to the extent of from 500 to 1000 words.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

Tell them what what is all about, says you? Oh, just anything and everything.

What is it that you would like to be told all about by your favorite myriad-minded commentator? Economics, pig prevention, the Constitution, the law, politics, war, history, labor, the C. I. O. and the A. F. of L., housing, international relations, birth control, the infield fly rule, Fascism, Nazism and Communism, inflation, agriculture or phrenology? Name me something we can't tell you all about with absolute, irrefutable authority and no two, perhaps, in agreement on any single point.

We include experts on the budget who can't balance an expense account; economic experts who can't find the 5:15 on a suburban time-table much less read a balance sheet, labor experts who never did a lick of work in their lives, pundits on the mechanical age who can't put a fresh ribbon on their own typewriters and resounding authorities on the problem of the farmer who never even grew a geranium in a pot.

We are, in short, the berries of the Fourth Estate, so passionate and self-important these last few years that some of our number, not content with telling the world what and why so on paper, must even rear back at public meetings and snort and sweat in the faces of our fellow citizens in outbursts of courthouse forensics intended to make them think, or anyway think they do.

Not only that, but these oral remarks are sometimes

Myriad-Minded Us

deemed to be of such priceless originality and wisdom as to justify reprinting in full next day, lest some immortal truth be gone with the wind when the cleaners air out the joint.

What causes us? Well, as nearly as I can figure it out, this trade began as a sort of journalistic vaudeville intended to entertain the customers and exert a little circulation pull of a slightly higher tone than that of the comics. Actually, even now at our grimmest, we aren't one, two, six with a real good strip in which some man is plotting to put out a little girl's eyes or throw a little boy into a blast furnace, a reassuring fact, if you are considering the good sense of the nation, as the syndicate managers, in their nasty way, are always reminding us.

In the days of the wham-sock strips our trade was just olives, requiring a cultivated taste, and as the comics veered off into tragedy and we drifted into isms and causes, the salesmen on the road found, as they continue to find today, that it was much easier to peddle serious funnies than funny seriousness. The comic artists still ride in the big cars and spend their winters shooting in the eighties down South, while we drive the light models and interview ourselves day after solemn day on the state of the nation and the wrongs of a woeful world.

You might think that once in a great while we would run out of intelligence, and I often marvel at my own inexhaustible fund of knowledge, but it just keeps on

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

bubbling up. Nowadays, numbers of our set even get into rather acrimonious clothesline spats figuring, like the old-time fight promoters, that a grudge fight is good for the gate. And the one sure way to drive a small competitor nuts, as Mr. Lippmann has demonstrated in several instances where efforts were made to smoke him out, is to ignore him as though he didn't exist.

Maybe I shouldn't be writing like this, revealing secrets of the trade and all, but I just got to thinking it over and, honest to God, it is getting plumb ridiculous.

Poker Game

THERE WAS a poker game—two rich guys and four other guys. The four other guys didn't have any money to speak of, but the rich guys had to deal them in because you can't play two-handed poker, and it is no fun high-spading back and forth. The poor guys were necessary for a quorum.

So the house said, "We are going to have to rejigger the kitty in this game. If one of you rich guys wins a pot you have to kick back up to 80 per cent. Then we will use part of it to stake the poor guys when they run out of chips. The rest of it we will use to pay for the sandwiches and beer and the porters and rent and the cops and all."

At first the rich guys thought this was fair enough. It was a nice, comfortable joint, and they had been doing all right.

But after a while they began to mutter about the kitty, and there came a terrible squawk when one of them took down a real big pot. He reached for the pot, but

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

just then the house said, "Hold on a minute, chum, till we figure this out. Let's see. Toon-tooz four and six-ten and eightums-eight is sixty-four, plus 30 per cent surtax and how about that stack of blues I saw you stick into your side pocket? We will have to charge you 80 per cent penalty for that evasion."

"Evasion!" the guy yelled. "What do you mean—evasion? That side pocket is my holding company. Get out the book. Get it out. Show me where it says you can't put your chips in your side pocket or your flask pocket or any pocket you want to. It's a free country."

"Makes no never-mind about a free country," the house said. "We got to take care of these poor guys or you won't have no poker game. It will just bust up in a fight, and you will be lucky you don't lose your pants. And the sandwiches and beer and heat and light and the ice bill and all. Listen. You guys get as much sandwiches and beer and heat and light as anybody else."

"Sandwiches and beer is all right," the rich guy said, "but how about all this caviar and champagne you are slopping around, and, anyway, the joint is overheated and the light's too bright. It hurts my eyes. You are wasting a lot of dough."

"Oh, shut up," one of the poor guys said, "or we will dump you rich mugs down the dumbwaiter and take over and run some other kind of game. We will deal blackjack just among ourselves and with your dough."

"You and who else?" the rich guy said.

Poker Game

"Me and my pals here," the poor guy said, and with that he made a pass at the rich guy, who yelled to the house, "Hey! Give a look. Can't you keep order in the joint? Why don't you hire some more muscle with all that kitty you are squandering around for caviar and wine and statues in the hallway?"

"But, listen," the other rich guy said to the house, "I'm a right guy. I'm all for your idea of staking these mugs out of the kitty to keep the game going, but put yourself in my place. Here I risk a whole hatful of chips and play my cards right while these dopes are raising on the draw to inside straights and bobtailed flushes, and when I win a pot you are right there with that big mitt. How about if it comes a time when I can't win for losing three or four times around? You are killing my initiative and enterprise acting like this. Why should I toss in eight inches of my good, hard-earned blues to win a couple of lousy little whites?"

The poor guys laughed out loud at the mention of "hard-earned" blues, and the house, who was kind of tough, especially toward the rich guys, said "economic royalist" and "well-fed clubman," and called for another new deal. The rich guys got pretty sick of the term "new deal."

But the house began to notice that no matter how much kitty the poor guys got they were always broke. One poor guy proposed dividing up all the dough equally and another had some scheme to let the poor guys go

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

shy and take down the amount they were shy, even if they lost.

Then, in the hope of stimulating the game, the house just abandoned the regular rules and began to deal a lot of crazy games like seven-toed Pete and gilligilloo and high-low with the red sevens and the one-eyed Jacks wild.

"This ain't poker," one of the rich guys said finally. "This ain't even rummy or casino or anything. Cash me in. I'm going to quit."

At this the four poor guys shoved back their chairs, grabbed pool cues and barred the door, but the house reached for the rich guy's pile and began to count up.

"Set down! Set down!" the house said to the poor guys. "If he wants to cash in he can cash in. But when a rich guy cashes in we take down 60 or 80 per cent, according to how much he has got. We call it the inheritance tax."

Disney

NOT KNOWING Walt Disney, I feel free to propose that his countrymen take some means of letting him know that in an era of trouble, worry and meanness he has given the human race more man-hours of pure, innocent joy and escape than any one else on earth. His films of "Snow White," "The Three Little Pigs," "The Hare and the Tortoise" and "The Country Mouse" have enabled millions to forget the world briefly in a blessed relaxation of body and spirit.

And the scene in "The Pied Piper" where the little crippled boy, straggling behind, in sudden panic jerked his body along to enter, in the nick of time, the enchanted land of candy flowers and ice cream trees, where instantly he was made whole and the crutches vanished, is too good to be sealed up forever in cans and shown only in dingy old theaters in revivals. There was panic in the audience, too, for just an instant, although every one must have felt confident that Disney would not close the mountain and shut out the crippled child, alone

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

of all the joyous throng, having once let him glimpse the glories within the gate.

I am almost afraid to propose this tribute to a man who has been a benefactor lest it tempt people to inform me that Walt Disney is not too hot when you know him—that he leaves nickel tips for foot-sore waitresses, that he hired members of the A. F. of L. when he should have hired from the C. I. O. and, is, therefore, an enemy of labor; that he votes Republican. If such complaints do lie against him I hope nobody will bring them up, because I feel sure that those who owe him a debt of gratitude would prefer not to discount the same with counter-claims.

Scan, if you will, the roster of all the angry men, honest or hypocritical, the sincere fighters for justice and human rights, the complete, incurable fakers who struggle for prominence and applause, and the well-meaning but confused and noisy jumble-wits, add together all that they have accomplished and compare the total to Walt Disney's score. Mr. Disney, I contend, has created more hours of complete, detached happiness than all the rest, and apparently not with grim intent to spread joy but only because that is the sort of man he is.

The marvels of "The Three Little Pigs" who were loved everywhere in their time, were surpassed in Disney's later productions, and it seems impossible that the artist can improve on the art and magic of the

Disney

scenes in which "The Country Mouse" drinks his way out of a glass of champagne on a banquet table and smiles and glares at his transparent reflection in a wabbling mold of cherry jelly.

The fluency of the facial expressions, all drawn by hand and, hitched together with a skill beyond imagining, seems to leave no challenge unmet, and it would be too much to ask that he do something better some time. But he does go steadily on, and never has a note of anger marred his work, for even the Big Bad Wolf was a hilarious figure as he tore off down the road on his rear after plunging into the kettle of turpentine.

My suggestion does not take the form of a monument hewn from a block of Senator George Berry's precious, submarine marble beneath the lake at Norris Dam, nor a platinum stove-lid to be tossed into a drawer among other coins of recognition. Disney has enough gold and bronze statues of misshapen nudes, lampooning the art which they are supposed to express, presented in honest but feeble acknowledgment of his trade leadership in the motion picture business. And a diploma would only take up more desk room in an office which must already be cluttered with such writs.

Put to it, I am unable to make a definite suggestion, my thought being more a feeling that the country somehow might contrive to touch the hand of Mr. Disney and just let him know in some simple way that

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

a troubled people are grateful for the greatest single-handed contribution to their joy these last half-dozen years—some way of saying “Take good care of yourself; you belong to us.”

The National Garret

THERE IS something about a national capital which automatically elects it the attic and catch-all for a nation's debris. It becomes the repository for a country's busted chairs, old letters and receipts, horsehair watch fobs, old magazines, old straw hats, fish poles, baby shoes, hose nozzles, locks of hair, cuff-links of which the mates have been lost, darning eggs, buttons, broken watches, bottle caps, wedding clothes, worn-out hammocks, lodge regalia, stereopticons, souvenir badges and high-school diplomas. Almost any object, in fact, which has been or is alleged to have been more or less intimately associated with some departed statesman, however insignificant or paltry, and which has become so useless as to defy the resources of the salvage bureau of the Salvation Army, may be forwarded to Washington with a certainty that somewhere in the capital, in some corridor of some government museum, room will be found in which to preserve it forever and ever, under glass. It is no exaggeration to say that in the course of time the government will be willing to accept

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

and cherish forever a tuft from the true shaving brush used by United States Senator George L. Berry or a shoelace, duly authenticated by affidavits as having been worn by Congressman the Honorable Thomas Blanton of Texas. Willing may not be the correct word, and cherish may not be the correct word, either. Better say, perhaps, that the government will be compelled by the morbid tradition which controls this vice to accept such relics and endure the stewardship until such time as a fortuitous lack of funds, a war or other providential favor makes a clean sweep of the accumulated junk and enables us to start over.

I doubt that my countrymen understand to what cost they are put to house and maintain, forever and ever, or approximately one hundred years, the trash which is in constant process of accumulation, all of it sacred to the memory of this or that hero of the Republic, who may have had the intellect of a coroner, the ethics of a Roosevelt, and no more idea of what it was all about than an Alabama dorky in a polling place.

A national capital becomes in a very short time the junk heap of the country, and, as the clutter accumulates, notwithstanding a sifting process to reject the more irrelevant souvenirs, the problems of stowage, roofage and attendance, including political appointees to dust off these historical leavings, run into appreciable money. There must be marble columns on the front of

The National Garret

the building and bandy-legged organization men in blue, appointed from all over, to patrol the foyers and aisles lest some tourist, in an excess of patriotic devotion, lift a letter from John Tyler to his cousin. And when these matters are paid for, there must be another building, much bigger and more expensive, to replace the old one which has now been knocked over by act of Congress.

Does Eddie Hungry of East Whiffletree, Neb., trap him an outsize crow and slay the same, evoking a stick or half-stick in the local Banner? If so, he must have the rind of this unfortunate fowl stuffed with wires, hay and shavings, and the eyeholes plugged with glass marbles, and ship it on to Washington, where his Congressman will find room for it in some government mausoleum beneath \$25 worth of plate glass, there to be preserved, at government expense, until the end of time or such time as the British or whoever kick the capital apart once more, according to ancient and irrevocable precedent.

Woodchuck, buzzard, badger, barn owl, they all are entitled to room in some cranny of the national attic, and not only that, but the statesman does not breathe who is so trivial but that, given a few years in which to become immortalized, he can hope to be reproduced in bronze somewhere in Washington as a problem to posterity. Statuary Hall already is sagging beneath the dead weight of departed Americans, including

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

some whose intellectual weight was in direct contrast to the heft of their effigies, and there is this consolation, if no other, that some day they may be melted down and shot from guns to keep a foe away.

Six-Day Race

OF ALL THE events on the calendar of sport, the only one which moves the patrons to serious thought is the vulgar six-day bike race, formerly the hoodlum's old home week but in recent years a festival of somewhat wider social scope. In the years that I know of only by hearsay the six-day bike races at the old Garden were reunions of picturesque thugs from the Bowery and other unpleasant parts of town, according to the reminiscences, usually delivered with a sigh, of my informants among the generation that is beginning to dodder and pine. I suspect that they exaggerate largely in several departments of their recollections, because one of the men whom they name to me as a very bad man of the old six-day bicycle races is still present about the bikes and the fights and is proprietor of a cheap little drum in Greenwich Village, catering to the out-of-town trade, for whom he poses as an underworld character. A professional underworld character is something like a circus Indian, however, and if you press any of the older generation to name you one man

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

that this character ever killed or one instance of his having stood up trading gun-fire with anybody, they cannot name you one or remember any particular incident that earned his reputation for him. I would not deny him his reputation, however, for that is his living now, that and his elephant ears, acquired when he was a preliminary fighter in the old sawdust clubs, and a nose with warts on it as big as a dill pickle. Ignorant, frowsy and harmless, he looks bad, but so does Man Mountain Dean, and the pair of them work at it.

In my time the old social character of the six-day bike race has changed, and now it is changing again. Tex Rickard wrought the first great change when he promoted slumming parties of the new crop of stock market aristocrats to attend the shows in the little hours of the morning, when there was nowhere to go but home. It was an affectation on their part in the first place, just as their love of the prize fights was an affectation, but they remained to be fascinated, because, I tell you, the six-day bike race is something to make even brokers sink up to their ankles in philosophical reflections and think and think and think.

The six-day bike race has always been a routine sport-page story, to be covered with a pretty fair lick on opening night, then dropped down to a little head for a couple of days and then brought up again to a climax on closing night. But along toward mid-week it was customary to assign some feature writer from the city side to get at

Six-Day Race

the real hidden meaning of the thing, the significance, as it were, which the sport writers, being just a lot of graduate office boys, could not detect. There is a city-side type of writer who reads 50-cent magazines with dirty words and no pictures in them who can see things in their relation to life and civilization and all such, and they took many a hack at the six-day bike race to interpret it to the better class of readers. Finally, in the happy days when there was plenty of city-room budget, some of the editors took to hiring great big middle-name magazine writers to do extra-special interpretations.

And what do you think the bike race did to them?

It made them think, too.

It made them think the same sort of thoughts that Rickard's dudes thought, and the fight managers and professional underworld characters and song-pluggers and the naïve plagiarists who write the songs, generally stealing them from one another, but sometimes, with rare industry, going back to the masters for their material. It made them think that the six-day bike race, scoff at it though you may, is just mocking, ironic caricature of life itself. Your life, my life, the life of every one who goes to the office or the job—people had jobs in those days—day after day, year after year until, at last, the bell rings. Then where are you? The six-day bike racer is just where he began. He has travelled a long way, hustling furiously at times, but when it is all over he hasn't gone anywhere.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

So we had many an extra-special significance piece with three names over it, like Empringham Osborne Which, famous magazine writer, or Emmeline Jasmine What, celebrated novelist, telling us exactly what all the boys of all the social groups at the six-day bike race had been thinking all along, which was a general idea that we come from nowhere and positively must go back there and, therefore, what is the big hurry?

I have seen this theme-thought of the six-day bike race done into pieces that were billed as stark, human documents, and recognized it as precisely the same idea that the regular sport-page hands had muttered back and forth through the cigarette smoke and garlic fumes as they sat with their feet on the rail after the copy had cleared for the office, long after midnight. Everybody thinks it. It cannot be escaped, because there it goes on before you, and it is always alike. People riding around and around, jamming, hurting themselves, grinding themselves to get where? Well, where do you think all this jamming and suffering and grinding is going to get you? People sit and brood at the bikes hour after silent hour.

The theme-thought of the bike race may not be very profound, but it is thought nevertheless, and people do not think at football games or fights or whatever else on the sport program. So, as an intellectual event, it stands alone in the sport business, the show that makes the people think.

“To Three Cups of Flour,
Add—”

A PICTURE HAS been published showing a dozen high-school boys in white coats and muffin hats preparing a batch of spaghetti in a school kitchen. This may seem innocent fun, but as one who had experience with amateur male cooks I desire to sound a warning. The amateur male cook destroys food, ruins pots, pans and the digestion of his victims, spatters mayonnaise, gravy and egg yolk all over the walls and ceiling and worst of all, bears himself with an insufferable air of modest artistry which never has been called to time until this moment.

I have known several amateur male cooks, but none more pernicious than Mr. Ik Shuman, one of the editors of *The New Yorker*, whose weakness comes over him in regular cycles about twice a year, at which time he whips up a something which he calls bouillabaisse.

At such times, a few days in advance of the acute stage, Mr. Shuman's eyes take on a foggy, faraway

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

look ; he forgets appointments and wanders off in strange byways of the city, shopping for the ingredients of bouillabaisse. He goes to Greek, Italian, Persian and Egyptian grocery stores, lifting the lids of crocks and pickle barrels and sniffing their contents and thumping strange melons and pinching exotic tomatoes to see if they are prime.

He comes home with his arms full of parcels and with little packets dangling from all his fingers by loops of string, and stores them away in the kitchen. He goes around mumbling jerked phrases about a pinch of saffron, a sprig of upas and a twist of bark from a slippery elm snipped in the dark of the moon. As the point of seizure grows nigher he begins to telephone friends that he is about to have bouillabaisse, and, having very loyal friends who rally to him in these crises out of respect for the pronounced virtues which he possesses when normal, he generally gets a quorum.

The last day, of course, is the worst. That day he stays home from work, and Betty takes little Jimmy down to sit all day in the park or in the movies, explaining, "Daddy is having bouillabaisse ; he will be all right tomorrow."

"But what is bouillabaisse?" Jimmy inquires, and Betty says, "You are too young to know, dear, and so am I."

At this time Mr. Shuman is in the kitchen up to his hip pockets in fish heads, dried octopi, dried eels, egg

“To Three Cups of Flour, Add—”

shells, shark fins, turtle giblets, olive oil bottles and brittle leaves of various kinds for seasoning, while on the stove there simmers and stews his chef-d'œuvre in the making. Fumes rise and permeate their love-bower, neighbors pack a few things hurriedly and leave the building, and the bubbles, rising higher and richer, splatter bouillabaisse juice on the walls and ceiling.

At evening Betty returns with Jimmy just before the arrival of the guests, who usually include Mr. Jimmy Cagney, the moving picture actor, a friend so true that he has been known to come all the way from Hollywood just to see Mr. Shuman through his hour. Once the bouillabaisse has been served the tension begins to ease. Mr. Shuman pours a nice wine, and after a few slugs his guests begin to feel no pain and even make passes at the bouillabaisse, like actors eating tiny bits of apple in dinner scenes on the stage.

The amateur male cook sits back awaiting compliments which are generously paid, to the injury of truth, and after all the guests have said twice around, “No, thank you, no more, but it was delicious,” Mr. Shuman begins to recognize familiar scenes and friendly faces.

On the way home the guests stop at some tavern to eat, and to Mr. Shuman's proud inquiry, “How was that bouillabaisse, my dove?” Betty answers, in all truth, “Never better, my hero, and are you all right now?”

Mr. Shuman also scrambles eggs and bakes bread, but

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

in fairness to him it should be stated that he never uses underhand tactics, as some amateur male cooks do. When Mr. Shuman is having bouillabaisse he frankly warns his guests of his condition, saying, "I am having bouillabaisse Thursday, and I want you to come." Other amateur male cooks are less straightforward.

I once knew in Washington a very nice man in all outward respects who said, "You must come up this evening. I am having a surprise."

Suspecting nothing, I went, and after the host had hidden my hat and coat he said, with that strange look in his eyes, "I'll bet you don't know what the surprise is."

"No," I said. "Tell me."

"Baked beans," he said, with a note of fanatic triumph. "I cooked them myself."

Spelvin Against Spelvin

AS GEORGE SPELVIN, American, was shaving himself one day last week, all of a sudden, wham! a half-brick fans our friend's ear and busts a gouge of plaster out of the wall. Mr. Spelvin took a look out the window and saw a whole mob of guys walking up and down wearing signs reading "George Spelvin unfair to organized labor," "George Spelvin is a dirty fink," "Spelvin is a scab," and so forth.

"Hey, what's your trouble?" Mr. Spelvin demanded.

"Boo!" "Lousy scab!" "Fink!" "Rat!" the mob yelled back.

"Why, you no-good bums," Mr. Spelvin yelled, losing his temper, "I been a union man twenty years, and most of you dirty bums couldn't even get into a union. Who the hell sent you around here, anyway?"

"The barbers' union sent us," yelled the spokesman. "The barbers declare George Spelvin unfair because he shaves himself."

"Well, that's a hot one," Mr. Spelvin said. "According to that, the barbers ought to beat the ears off the

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

whole crowd of you mugs because you ain't even washed your ugly mushes in a year, much less bought you a shave."

Well, just about then Mr. Spelvin's loving old lady pokes her head out of the kitchen and yipped:—"Hey, Pa, come here. There's a lot of bums out in back here walking up and down insulting me!"

"No kidding," said George. "What about?"

"Come on and look, you dirty coward!" Mrs. Spelvin yelled back. "Why would I be kidding about guys insulting me? I haven't been insulted that way in twenty years. These mugs are insulting me about union stuff." So George went back to the kitchen just as a target egg skushed against the window and some cabbages and things landed on the porch.

"Hey!" George yelled. "Are you guys out of your mind? What's the idea heaving stuff at my love bower and yelling insults at my dream girl?"

"Your old lady is unfair to organized labor," one guy hollered.

"For gossakes, brother, you're leaping," George said. "My old lady ain't union, mister, nor non-union or anything else. Union is just no never mind one way or another with her. She's a home girl. She don't have no job. Try next door."

"No, not next door. George Spelvin's old lady is a dirty fink, scab, rat, bum! Boo!" the one guy yelled. And the rest of the crowd kind of liked the sound of that,

Spelvin Against Spelvin

so they started dancing up and down and yelling, "Fink!" "Scab!" "Rat!" "Bum!" "Boo!" over and over.

"Puddin'," George said to his wife, "no foolin'. Have you been two-timing me, out holding down a job on me while I'm away at work?"

The old girl gave him a look.

"Somebody must be nuts," she said. "Where would I be getting time to hold down a job? And, anyway, do you think I am that crazy about work?"

"George Spelvin's old lady is unfair to the laundry workers," a mug yelled. "She does her own washing."

"Oh! Now it comes out," the old girl said. "Well, my hero, it looks like you will have to stake me to laundry dough after this."

"And Spelvin's old lady is unfair to the teamsters," another guy said. "She carries her groceries home from the cash store to save delivery expenses. She is unfair to the bookkeepers, too, by not having a charge account. And unfair to the garment workers because she makes her own clothes. And George is unfair to the waiters because he carries his lunch—the dirty fink, scab, rat, bum, boo! And he's a crumb to the bus drivers' union because he walks to work, and the brewery workers are on him because he boycotted them when he went up the pole New Year's. Dirty fink, scab, rat, bum, boo, and so is his old lady!"

George's manhood got sore at that, and he was just about to tear out and start belting when the phone rang.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

It was George's own union, and the guy on the other end said, "Everybody turn out and picket 222 Slug Street. Barbers, laundry guys, teamsters, bus drivers, bookkeepers, garment guys and waiters got some guy down for being unfair. It ain't our headache, but we got to stand together. Bring your old lady, too."

So what do you know? Day after day old George and the No. 1 Doll have been flatfooting up and down in front of their own love nest and heaving stuff at their own windows and yelling, "Fink, scab, rat, bum, boo, and so is his old lady!"

“*Ayak?*”—“*Akia*”

LINES FROM the diary of a great liberalizing influence:

June 8.—Awful tired all day. Out all night flogging Hyman Cohen, the clothes presser, for taking business away from Klansman Jones. Ten of us in masks and robes grabbed him out of his house at 1 A.M., rode him twenty miles out in the country, and beat him with straps until he collapsed. Let him walk back. Very inspiring to me, and my physical fatigue today is no price at all to pay for the marvellous spiritual elation which I have felt. Never will I forget the disgusting shrieks of Cohen's wife and children in the dark. Place smelled of garlic. Revolting and very un-American.

June 26.—Attended Klorero last night and heard inspiring addresses by Kleagle, Kligrapp and Great Exalted Kludd. Took measures to preserve American standards of justice in impending trial of two of our members for murder. Seems they shot a town marshal in Hickory Center for interfering with the Americanization of a Catholic named Murphy by the tar-and-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

feather ritual. Our two brothers have been indicted as a matter of form, although the prosecuting attorney, of course, is Klannish and will protect American ideals in the trial by presenting a weak case. Nevertheless, to guarantee the preservation of American justice in the trial, we have arranged to place seven Klansmen on the jury.

July 12.—I have been swelling with pride all day. My Klannishness is the greatest, most purifying spiritual force of all my life. Last night six of us quietly went to the home of the Smith woman who calls herself a widow. Good-looking blonde with two children and no visible means of support, although she claims to have \$1800 life insurance from her husband's death. The wife of one of our members came to Klonvokation and secretly informed us that the Smith woman was seen talking to a married man on East Oak Street after dark twice in one week. Plain case of attempting to wreck an American home.

So six of us grabbed her last night, took her up in the hills, and by the light of a fiery cross stripped all her clothes off, smeared her with tar, sprinkled her with feathers, and burned a scarlet letter on her forehead with acid. I couldn't help notice that she has a very good figure, stripped. She screamed that she was an innocent victim of female jealousy, but she was convicted on the word of a Klanswoman representing the highest type of 100 per cent American womanhood.

“Ayak?”—“Akia”

July 22.—I suppose it is overambitious of me, but I hope to get in a position some day where I can place a real American interpretation on the laws for the education of the children. Believe me, I will abolish the teaching of alien Roman Popishness in private schools.

Aug. 3.—Been having nigger trouble lately around here. Fresh niggers won't work for 75 cents a day, demanding up to a dollar and a quarter. Half a dozen of our members complained of a serious situation, demanding that we send them to road gang for loafing when work is available at good wages. But that would only arouse some un-American lawyer to defend them on strained Constitutional grounds and cause endless trouble. I proposed more American methods. Therefore fifty of us raided half a dozen cabins, burned them down, grabbed four lazy good-for-nothing niggers, tied them to trees and gave them a lesson in white supremacy.

Two of them busted loose and started to run, and in the excitement several guns were discharged, with the result that the fugitives were killed. We quickly disbanded, hiding our hoods and robes under the seats of our cars, and came back to town by separate routes. That was three days ago, and the treatment has been 100 per cent effective. Niggers all scared now, and our members report they are willing to work for even as little as 50 cents.

Aug. 17.—One great spiritual satisfaction of Klan-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

nishness is to see un-American businesses being put out of business by our secret boycott. Dorsey's hardware store folded up last week and Klansman Swivet will get all his trade. I always pretend to be a good friend of Dorsey, but he's a Catholic and can't be trusted to maintain American ideals.

Sept. 1.—At last the highest ambition of my life has been gratified. I am too full for words, and I take office in the sacred, unfailing bond of Klannishness.

Drunkards' Pensions

THERE IS a serious flaw in the liquor laws, the correction of which would work to the advantage of the government, the liquor industry and the consumer. Not always am I able to suggest a remedy when pointing to a fault, but in this case I propose a sort of social security fund for drunkards and liquor invalids and their dependents, to be amassed by a small deduction from the taxes which already are imposed on the traffic.

The plan is a happy one, in that it bespeaks neither a new tax nor the increase of any duty now existing. And I may even suggest that it would yield a net saving in the present cost of confining the wretched rum-pot in an inefficient and often brutal manner, to say nothing of the profit to be gained by the occasional if temporary redemptions and the protection of the victim's family.

It could be argued, also, that there would be a gain in national man-power, as of course there would be. But let us keep this on an honest plane and con-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

fess that that is a weak selling point in a country whose worst problem is to find work for the manpower now available.

Under present conditions the drunkard or liquor invalid is neglected and despised and his dependents receive no organized sympathy, in contrast to the case of the criminal whose rehabilitation is a topic of constant agitation and whose family receives much pity and some aid. Yet the criminal is an enemy of society, whereas the man who drinks to excess obviously is a contributor to one of the most reliable and least troublesome revenues of government.

So I propose, just for a figure, which may be much too high, the allocation of one-half a cent per drink on all the liquor consumed to a special fund for the purpose described. A half-cent might be more than sufficient, for I am thinking of a large-scale undertaking under efficient management, with the communities contributing each a share out of their taxes, as in many present federal-local relief operations. The federal fund easily could be reckoned on a fixed rate of so many standard drinks per quart with the Internal Revenue and Customs figures as the index. Local funds could be calculated neatly on the basis of the dealers' invoices.

Then, should a man fall out of the line as an alcoholic, let him be certified for treatment at the nearest public cure and his family pensioned during his ab-

Drunkards' Pensions

sence, not as a matter of charity or official condescension, but as a matter of their right. He and indirectly they will have contributed to the fund for years and probably at the sacrifice of many comforts. And though the individual may receive back more in benefits than he paid in as taxes, be it remembered that for every beneficiary there will be 100 or more contributors who never will find it necessary to tap the fund.

In cases where home treatment, whether for snakes, ulcers, or liver trouble seems desirable, that could be arranged, too, with very little risk of imposture. Any doctor can tell by simple tests whether a man really has the shrieks. No teetotaler, down from overeating or undereating, could deceive the examiners, who know a drinker when they see one. Still, for moral effect, I would propose fine and imprisonment for any teetotaler who undertook to defraud the government by posing as a drunkard—a very reprehensible thing to do, but not beneath some teetotalers.

The principle is similar to that of the gasoline tax, which, in most cases, is supposed to be used solely for the roads. Gasoline consumers are deemed to have a special right in this matter, but no community has ever considered the obvious fact that the ultimate consumer of liquor incurs certain risks in providing the bountiful liquor revenues.

And certainly the liquor industry should be agree-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

able. Many salvage jobs would return to the bars to resume their status of valued customers and drunkenness would acquire respectability. Up to now it has been held disreputable and a discredit to the industry.

This industry must be preserved. The nation needs those jobs and those taxes, but it is cruelly unfair not to care for the casualties among those who create the jobs and pay the taxes. The drunkard, unlike the criminal, always has paid his way.

Golden Spoon

NOBODY HAS ever put a finger on the exact spot where Mr. Roosevelt is a pain in the neck to a large proportion of those Americans whom he describes as economic royalists and well-fed clubmen.

The element of rich men whom I have in mind are members of the Horatio Alger school who started from scratch as typical, one-gallus, Whitcomb Riley barefoot boys. They got their rudimentary knowing in a one-room or two-room schoolhouse, learned swimming in Goose Crick, split kindling, pumped and carried water by hand and in their high school years sold papers, worked in quarries, laid paving blocks, mowed lawns, shovelled snow and coal and dragged out ashes.

In every possible way they hustled to make an honest quarter or a dollar, always with the ambition to become successful or, in a coarser word, rich. College in those days was for the rich or the uncommonly studious and dogged poor, and the college boy of Mr. Roosevelt's own class, backed by rich parents, was known somewhat

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

contemptuously as a rah-rah or a Cholly and was depicted in the comic papers with a big, fuzzy chrysanthemum in his lapel and sucking the handle of his walking stick.

Horatio Alger was the most popular boys' author of the time, and, like some of our most opulent fiction writers of today, he wrote the same story over and over. It was called *Bound to Rise*, *Dick Mordaunt's Career* or *Upward and Onward*, but it was always the story of the boy with the widowed mother or no parents at all who worked hard, suffered much, conquered temptation, and in the last chapter wore a gold watch and chain. The hero was an insufferable little prig, and nobody ever tried to copy his morals, but his success was dream stuff and he was the inspiration of many men who are now either rich or quite well to do and who got that way playing the game according to the rules which were unanimously recognized and against heavy odds.

Many of them had to quit school early to take the responsibility of supporting their mothers and younger brothers and sisters, and when at last they met the one and only and decided to get married they moved into a boarding house or furnished room or rented a little house or flat furnished up with installment plan furniture bought at extortionate rates of interest.

Mr. Roosevelt himself never spent a day in a public school in all his life. The public schools never were and are not now good enough for the Roosevelts, and when

Golden Spoon

Mr. Roosevelt had done with nurses and tutors he went to a dude school called Groton, which prepared him for Harvard, and after he had married and had taken his bride for a honeymoon tour of England, France, Italy and Germany they returned home in time for him to go to Columbia Law School.

"My mother-in-law," writes Mrs. Roosevelt in her book, "had taken a house for us. She had furnished it and engaged our servants."

Later, Mrs. Roosevelt writes, "for a while we had, as waitress, my father and mother's waitress," and, again, "during the next few years we observed in summer much the same routine. We visited my mother-in-law at Hyde Park for a time and then went up to stay with her at Campobello. Ordinarily my husband sailed up and down the coast in the little schooner *Half Moon* and took perhaps one or two short cruises."

In 1908 the President's mother thought their little house too small and therefore bought a plot in New York and built another for them. Later she also bought and gave to Franklin Roosevelt and his young wife an estate on Campobello Island, including a house completely furnished even to china, glass and linens.

For Mr. Roosevelt to sail his own schooner around Fundy when he had never yet assumed the task of supporting his own wife unassisted was all right, but let some other man cock a funny cap over his eye and toss off such words as "Ahoy!" "Port!" and "Starboard!"

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

on a yacht bought with his own money in enjoyment of his own success and he is not merely ridiculous but an enemy of the great common people of whom the President is paradoxically one.

There are those who call Mr. Roosevelt a traitor to his class, but that cry comes from the hereditary rich who grew up endowed and, as he did, looked to their mothers and fathers for support and luxuries long after they had ceased to be children. The class that I have in mind take pride in having made their own way. They are proud to have taken care of their own parents, and every crack from him about well-fed clubmen and economic royalists evokes from them the soul-satisfying and contemptuous taunt, "mama's boy."

So This Is Scotland Yard

THERE ARE many reasons why the British crime rate is a matter of national pride with them and, by comparison, a matter of national reproach to the United States, but the stupidity of the British criminal and his half-heartedness in his work never receive proper consideration.

To be sure, their courts are run by honest men, and their counsel for the defense are restricted to the evidence and are forbidden to employ bribery, blackmail, physical intimidation, hysteria, political influence or other familiar blackjacks and jimmies which enlarge the professional kit of those American attorneys who dedicate themselves to the sacred rights of the criminal.

Moreover, their country is small, and the native population, though dense, is stationary. So the British police are spared the problem of the restless millions who rattle around the United States in aimless wanderings, often changing identity as they go.

All these things help the police and Scotland Yard and hamper the criminal, but probably the most im-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

portant aids to law enforcement are the high character of the judges and their pride, which is often pompous but rarely injurious to the interests of an innocent man. No Tammany leader ever calls up an English judge in the middle of the night to order a writ for a thieving public official, and silly objections and motions to acquit or declare a mistrial would win for the attorney who had the effrontery to offer them nothing better than a learned bawling out and might result in his disbarment.

The British have learned to regard crime and punishment as cause and inevitable effect, and intelligent people among them understand the futility of trying to get away with anything. As a result the field of crime is left almost exclusively to a pathetic minority of dumb, frightened, incompetent first offenders who do their little jobs badly in the first place, label themselves with guilt and generally cave in the minute they are accused, exclaiming, "Yes, I did it. I have been a fool," or, "I shall not insult your intelligence by offering a denial. I am frightfully sorry."

Such impulsive remarks are commonplace evidence in the English courts, and are given full weight, unless the lawyer for the defense wants to challenge the policeman's honesty. This is a serious responsibility. Call an English cop a perjurer and you must go down the line with him, for he has the right to defend himself in a separate hearing. Charge him with beating up the pris-

So This Is Scotland Yard

oner to obtain the confession and again the burden of proof is on you, for the British do not accept such reflections on their police as mere courtroom repartee to be laughed off by cop and counsel at the bar of the courthouse pub in the noon recess. They have a quaint earnestness about such matters, which is rather comic to any one schooled in the ethics of the American courts.

The English have a secret longing for dirty work, expressed in their gaudy exploitation of American crime, which fascinates them strangely, and in their passion for house-party murders revealed in mystery novels which come rolling off the press with almost the rapidity of newspapers. But, although there has been a veritable massacre of Lady Agathas and Sir Beverly Bathwaters within the board covers of their favorite books, in actual fact the deceased in a British murder case generally is an ignorant, commonplace victim of some brainless clod who has neither the ingenuity to plan an artful crime nor the courage to put up a gump-tious defense.

The last time the British were called on to shoot it out with bad men barricaded in a house they mobilized troops from the Wellington Barracks, near Buckingham Palace, and the excitement was so great and the affront to Law and Order so grave that Winston Churchill, as Home Secretary, presided over the siege in person. That was 'way back before the war, and the outrage loomed so big against the quiet habit of their

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

life that the London papers still observe the anniversary with reminiscent articles.

The typical English murder is that in which a stupid man and woman butcher her husband or his wife, ship the legs to Brighton, the head and arms to Glasgow and the, as it were, giblets to Newcastle-on-Tyne, using assumed names for deep deception. They then take a trip to Bournemouth to spend the life insurance on fish and chips, leaving the canary at home to starve. A neighbor now calls the S. P. C. A. to succor this suffering fowl, and the S. P. C. A. calls the police, who have just discovered the grisly baggage, thanks to the keen intelligence of a station master whose nose knew. Simultaneously a shrewd seaside landlady informs the local police that the lodgers in No. 6 seem suspicious because they are squandering money on fish and chips, and, anyway, she listened at the keyhole and heard him say to her, "Your 'usband didn't half squirm, did he, pet, when I 'it 'im with the 'atchet?"

Now comes the local bobby with his notebook, but without pistol or apprehension, to interview the authors of this highly mysterious crime, who stand up together in honest awe of the law and exclaim, like children speaking a piece, "Yes, we did it. We very much regret our rash act and are ready to pay the penalty."

So the British hang them both and Scotland Yard gets credit for another triumph, all to the great inferen-

So This Is Scotland Yard

tial disgrace of the American cops who have to fight it out with Dillingers and Harvey Baileys and Vincent Colls and crooked lawyers, low-grade governors, sentimental juries and courts beneath contempt.

The Versailles Tragedy

EVERY TIME I see some reference to the vindictive folly of the Treaty of Versailles and the attempt to enslave a great people, I recall the loving kindness of the German nation toward its enemies and the hopeful augury of the treaty they made with the Russians when they had them by the throat.

A generous lot the Germans were, as they had demonstrated in their dealings with France in 1870, and when at last there came an end to the Great War, if they had been victorious no doubt they would have begged the pardon of the French for the unavoidable destruction of their towns and factories in the fury of the scuffle and repaired the damage at their own expense.

I assume, too, that they would have made no grab for the British colonies nor any move toward a reduction of the British navy, by contrast with the British treatment of theirs. And, although the Kaiser in the heat of anger had wired the King of Italy in 1915, "I shall never forget your perfidy," what he meant prob-

The Versailles Tragedy

ably was that he intended to reward Italy with certain gifts along the Adriatic by way of returning good for evil and shaming an erring brother in the ermine.

In a way, it seems a shame the Germans didn't win, because surely the world would have been much better off today, so gracious were the Kaiser's hosts in all their terms with conquered peoples and so loath to exploit for sordid gain the helpless state of a beaten foe.

Calais they would have let alone, because, after all, it wasn't really theirs, though theirs it would have been for the taking. Belgium would have been kept sovereign and independent and Germany would have helped her to her feet and brushed her off. It is grotesque to think they might have interfered with Britain's trade or soaked up Poland, except in a brotherly way for the Polish people's own protection, and if they had sent armies to parade along Whitehall or the Place de la Concorde, those troops would have gone as emissaries of peace, not to humiliate the natives or enforce the payment of cash indemnities.

The Germans, not being predatory but wishing only to live in peace and be let alone, would have made no passes at any island off our coasts suitable for naval bases, would have reaffirmed the Monroe Doctrine without our asking, and, doubtless, would have let us keep our navy intact. And, of course they would have spurned all thought of a cash penalty for our error in resisting their beneficent will.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

Yes, the Treaty of Versailles was a poisonous document inflicting vengeance on a noble race, but there was no way of knowing at the time that Germany was kind and good. The French—those ingrates—thought the Treaty of Frankfort with its terms of gold and territory had been rather harsh on them, and the rest of the world was puzzled and alarmed by the Germans' reticence when asked to name their aims.

Their intention was to help their neighbors and live on cordial terms with one and all but, like every great, gruff giant with a heart of gold and tender sentiments, the Kaiser and his people put on a rough exterior to conceal their sentimental nature. You sometimes hear of a heavy-handed, roaring bul'dozer who beats his wife, kicks his dog and persecutes his employees not because of any brutal streak, but because, on the contrary, he doesn't want the world to know how kind he really is.

But it seems unfair to blame the diplomats on the victorious side of the table for the absence of XXXs, denoting kisses, in the Treaty of Versailles. They were only representatives of their people and those people, being ignorant and still excited, demanded a little revenge. Not much revenge, to be sure, for they didn't insist on a victorious march through Berlin to humiliate the Germans in their own capital, or the sack of German cities. They just wanted to be good and sure their side had won, which is human nature among the lower orders for you. If the Germans still have kicking

The Versailles Tragedy

around in their archives a copy of the terms of peace which they were planning to offer their enemies, they owe it to the world to reveal the same as an example of sweet and noble magnanimity of a superior but misused race.

White Tie and Tails

WASHINGTON.—The full-dress suit, which is compulsory at the Gridiron Dinners in Washington, is unquestionably the most expensive male costume outside the military and diplomatic uniformed ranks. It costs as much as \$200, although it is possible to buy ready-mades for \$50, but the point is that unless a man is an actor, a Cabinet member or a night club rounder, to whom the full-dress suit is a professional uniform, like the farmer's overalls or the horseshoer's leather apron, he wears it too seldom to get his money's worth.

It is not uncommon for a man to buy a dress suit for one special event and never have occasion to wear it again, and the Bureau of Standards has ascertained that the average number of wearings is just a fraction over three at an average cost of \$35 per wearing.

The rest of the time dress suits hang in closets, and between events men outgrow them and mislay the incidental equipment, such as the white tie with the snapper in the back, the pearl thing for the middle of the shirt-

White Tie and Tails

front and the cuff links, which must be platinum, white gold or aluminum. Then all of a sudden there comes a heavy date at which the subject feels that he must be present lest it be thought that he cannot afford a dress suit, and there is great confusion marked by cries of "Where is that pearl thing for the middle of my shirt-front?" and "Look how these pants have shrunk!"

If there is time the pants can be let out from behind, where the tailors usually leave some overlap for expansion, but if the subject waits until the last minute to inspect his equipment he chokes himself into the pants until he sits down at the table, where he can let go a couple of top buttons and cover up with his napkin.

Most men, however, usually put off inspection until the last minute, and always at the hotels in Washington on Gridiron nights the bellhops are run ragged chasing around the stores buying those pearl things and white vest harness, patent leather slippers and all.

Men say they do not like to dress up in this costume, and, in fact, they don't, because the fear of losing or forgetting something essential until after the stores are closed makes for nervous indigestion and destroys all the pleasure. But after they are dressed up they like it pretty well, as may be seen in the way they swish their tails and give themselves the how-do-you-do in the mirrors. They all hope they look like Fred Astaire, even little potty guys and big jowly guys. However, nobody really looks like Astaire, because look-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

ing like Fred Astaire is a business with him. If everybody could do it there would be no money in being Mr. Astaire.

The coat is an uneasy garment because it doesn't have any side pockets. A man goes to put his hand in his pocket for something and asks himself, "Hey, where is my side pocket?" Then he remembers, "Oh, yes, I am in full dress—looking like Fred Astaire."

(Looks at self in mirror.)

The coat of the suit doesn't meet in front, being purposely scant so as to display the white vest, which is a phony with phony buttons on it and really just a harness which goes over the head and holds together with a strap in the back. The breast of the coat is padded to make it puff out with manliness, and the effect is rather good except that so many tailors make the collar wrong. The collar slips down, disclosing the metal snapper in the back of the necktie and exposing the fact that the tie is stuffed, not tied. Most of them are stuffed, not tied, but it is embarrassing, nevertheless, to feel that the snapper is showing, so in any dress suit gathering men may be seen constantly hunching their shoulders to get the collar up or scrunching down and carrying themselves stoop-shouldered for the same effect.

The social power of the dress suit is a strange mystery. It is only a suit of clothes deliberately designed to be of no practical use, and the accoutrements that go with it are rank foolishness and vanity. Yet at a

White Tie and Tails

dress suit occasion the man who has one is socially acceptable and the man without one is untouchable, even though every one knows that in personal qualities, such as honor, ability and all, the values are exactly the reverse.

Aleck Troyanovsky, the Soviet Ambassador, wears one on formal occasions, but Earl Browder, the boss Communist in this country, refuses to wear full dress, presumably on the ground that it is the uniform of the capitalist enemy forces in the war of the masses against the classes.

In Reply to Mr. Farley

I WOULD LIKE to sound off on a speech in which Jim Farley gave the newspapers the rough side of his tongue with an insinuation that if he had a message for the nation that message, given through the press, would be adulterated, changed and contaminated with editorial comment. He said the same message, delivered by air, would reach the consumer in the original package with the seals unbroken.

In the first place, our old Prize Fight Commissioner is swollen pretty big when he speaks of himself as one who might have a message for the nation. Our old Prize Fight Commissioner is not a man with a message but a professional party politician who, for reasons of his own, violated his own rules while chairman of the Prize Fight Commission to license ex-convicts as managers and seconds and even issued a license to Abe Attell, the genius of the fake world series of 1919, which was the most notorious fix in the sport racket since the days of the Mabray Gang, probably before your time.

You may say that it is a pretty far cry back to Jim's

In Reply to Mr. Farley

days on the Prize Fight Commission, but I say that, like Hugo Black, when he joined the masked terror, Jim had achieved his full ethical growth, and his conduct then is a true specimen of the conduct that we may expect now and henceforth.

Once Jim rescinded an order suspending Primo Carnera for life for the sole reason that his friend Jimmy Johnston had a ball yard on his hands and wanted to make some money running a Sharkey-Carnera fight. Jim said he did this because Johnston was his friend and asked, "What good is a friend if he won't do a favor?"

So suppose we assume that the same ethics would govern his conduct today in the case of a friend who needed a little official favor from Washington to enable him to make some money and divide any message that Jim may have for the nation by just that. This is no imaginary case. It is in the record as an expression of Jim Farley's notion of responsibility in public office, and it goes just as he laid it.

And now to the point whether any message of Farley or any other professional politician is, of itself, pure and whether it should be allowed to pass without editorial question. The truth is that no professional politician ever gives both sides. Even though he knows he is in the wrong, as Jim did in the New York Mayoralty campaign, between La Guardia and Mahoney, the politician delivers a biased message in the spirit of a

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

lawyer or a high school debater. It is not his business to give the opposition credit for its virtues, great or puny as they may be, or to acknowledge his own candidate's faults or the guilt or failure of his own party, though he be only too well aware of the same.

In Jim's support of Jerry Mahoney, the Tammany candidate against Fiorello La Guardia, did any one hear any attempt to dispose of the record of thievery which Tammany achieved during the very years that Farley and Jimmy Walker were ringside pals at the big fights? Or did Jim recognize any of the obvious accomplishments of La Guardia's administration? Did any one ever hear any knowingly inferior candidate of a corrupt party, of whom there have been many, say, verbatim or in effect, "My message is that my opponent is the better man, that his party is better than mine and that you have a patriotic duty to vote for him and against me on election day"? And, frankly, are not all such messages therefore dishonest?

As to the editorial bias of the press I make no disclaimer, but, with a few conspicuous and rather silly exceptions, the newspapers always pay more respect to public intelligence in their editorial comment than politicians reveal in the forensic canned goods prepared by abandoned hacks who bring to the service of the National Committee the same mendacious genius that Jim condemns as of the editorial columns.

There is a fight on to emancipate the air from politi-

In Reply to Mr. Farley

cal control, but the radio is too beholden to politicians capable of favoring a friend or rescinding an enemy's license to venture a word on its own behalf. Prize fighters didn't criticize Farley or William Muldoon, and the radio operators are timid for similar reasons. So the fight for freedom of the radio is being fought by the newspapers which this administration, having tried and failed to control, now would like to discredit.

Sick Town

EASTPORT, ME., July 29.—

Bowed under the burden of a big trash can, a man in ragged overalls picked his way over the rotten planks of the dock jutting out from one of the abandoned sardine canneries. Selecting a hole where the flooring had given away to weather and neglect, he dumped the load into the dirty tide. Huge fish heads were washing to and fro in the shallow water as the sea ebbed out. Filth covered the narrow beach where a half wild dog, with yellow eyes, foraged in competition with the scavenger gulls—tin cans, a barnacled crank shaft, old shoes, old tires and dirt.

On the next dock three laborers, with peaveys, were loading great wooden beams onto a barge. In the warehouse of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, clerks were checking out the remaining marine supplies of the abandoned Passamaquoddy Dam job.

So many coils of rope, so many marker buoys, so many anchors and lanterns and so many feet of cable and chain. A seagoing tug was expected in to pick up

Sick Town

two barges used on the job and tow them down to Boston.

Along the dirty Main Street men with nothing to do occupied themselves doing nothing. This was the principal occupation of a large proportion of Eastport's man-power for a long time before the Quoddy job began. It is likely to be their principal occupation for a long time to come.

The stores displayed in their windows poor, cheap merchandise, and not much of that, but most of them also showed photographs of Franklin D. Roosevelt between crossed American flags, in anticipation of the President's visit.

Mr. Roosevelt has abandoned Eastport to poverty and decay after showing the town a beautiful vision of big factories, a crowded seaport and prosperity. The people seem unable to believe that "the government" will go through with its announced intention of closing down the job with the work less than half finished and seven million dollars invested.

But "the government" isn't kidding, and in two weeks the construction will have tailed off to complete suspension. After that only a few hands will be left on the Quoddy job, principally clerical and administrative help housed in the Quoddy model village or in the executive houses up on Snob Hill.

Not quite comparable to the ghost towns of the West, Eastport is, nevertheless, sick of a wasting disease. It

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

was a strong, brave town in its time, with men who went out through treacherous whirlpools created by the Fundy tides and ships calling in from everywhere. Many of the men didn't come back, and they are remembered with weathered headstones in the graveyards inscribed "Lost at Sea."

There are various explanations why Eastport lost her gumption, but none of them seems quite sound.

For example, the government inspectors suddenly became very particular about the quality of the sardines packed in the canneries. They would select a few fish out of a hogshead, and if they found a couple bearing a certain kind of spots would condemn the whole catch as being diseased.

The fishermen claimed they had been eating such fish themselves for generations and selling them into the market without unpleasant effects. Moreover, Portuguese and Scandinavian canned sardines are admitted to the American trade sight unseen.

But a few hundred yards across the water the town of Lubec is carrying on the sardine trade and doing all right under the same handicaps. And Lubec, on a different neck of land, is fifteen miles from the railroad.

It seems far-fetched to say that psychology licked Eastport, but, nevertheless, there is an air of defeat in the listlessness and filth of the town, whereas Lubec is lively, neat and apparently self-confident.

There is a settlement of Passamaquoddy Indians at

Sick Town

Perry, six miles from Eastport, and the Indians live in filthy hovels—one of those rural slums that Mr. Roosevelt has been talking about these last few years. But the Indians gave up the battle long ago and settled down to be wards of the government. Now their conquerors are being pulled down to their own level, apparently unable to call on any power within themselves to rouse up and resume the fight.

Feelthy Peectures

IT WOULD be hard to find a better or worse example of consistent inconsistency than that presented by those journalistic Minskys who publish editorials deploring sexual crime and denouncing the parole boards in papers which, only a page or two removed from this resounding purity, constantly print pictures of more or less naked females. We all know that this type of art sells papers, and any one who ever has had anything to do with a picture desk knows of the temptation to go as far as public opinion will allow in the presentation of salacious illustrations, often without the slightest topical justification except as sex is always topical.

The bathing beauty contests are a rich source of this material, Hollywood supplies it in abundance free, and the press agents for theatres and night clubs are always willing to shower down glossy prints of well-formed floozies with little on before and a little less than half of that behind.

It makes print day after day, increasingly raw, often

Feelthy Peectures

attended by smirking cutlines, and though normal individuals with a fairly high boiling point may be able to gaze upon the same without serious temptation to dash out and murder a child in a cellar or a bride in a bathtub, the effect on the imagination of drooling degenerates, of whom there are always many at large, need not be guessed at.

It gives them ideas, and while none of the tragedies of recent years has been traced directly to something a lunatic saw published in a paper, nobody can deny that the study of such art by an abnormal man can arouse emotions which otherwise might have been kept in the doghouse. In fact, such pictures give even normal men ideas, and every picture editor knows that in selecting a shot of a hot number in a G-string and bib over another showing a Governor dedicating a new jail he is appealing to lust and circulation.

A conspicuous example of this occurred in the case of the Gedeon girl, the illustrator's and photographer's model who was killed by a wild man in a New York apartment. The murderer was a man with a record who probably should not have been loose on the town but was loose nevertheless, like many others. The crime was atrocious and was followed in New York by several murders of children by low-grade things who should have been kept under glass when the police put them there the first time.

But, while expressing shock and horror at all this in that type of writing known to the trade as the standard

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

"My-God-can-such-things-be" editorial, many papers dredged through the professional files to bring up pictures of Miss Gedeon attired in such a fashion and posed in such a manner as might in the words of an old song, make a preacher lay his Bible down. There was nothing to this but a presentation of dirty pictures of the Parisian art postcard type with news value as a mere excuse and circulation as the motive.

There were two other victims in the same job of murder, but one was a middle-aged woman, not an artist's model, and the other was a bartender. They were just as dead as the girl, but there was no call for photographs of them beyond the first day. It is impossible to say how great effect such pictures, and the pictures in some newspapers, of show girls posed in nothing much, may have on the mentality of the low-down. But even normal men, speaking out of their own reactions, will be unable to recommend them as a sedative or an inspiration to pure and quiet thought.

They are morally alike with the strip-tease of the burlesque shows which was canned out of the New York theatres and other theatres elsewhere because it became just too rotten for public toleration, and a paper has a great gall to denounce burlesque or even to bawl out the police and parole officers while using its space to present an equally dirty and provocative show on paper.

Some papers are guilty in worse degrees than others,

Feelthy Peectures

but we kid ourselves if we think the customers are deceived by right-minded editorials against rape staggered with pictures which, to certain dangerous elements of the population, can be expected to suggest nothing else but.

Submarginal Minds

AT LAST, IN various parts of the country, the teachers who promoted the great American plague of education are beginning to feel twinges of conscience and to concede, by inches, that the person whose mind has been landscaped is not necessarily any happier for that and may be more troublesome than he would have been if he had been permitted to remain dumb.

The assumption that one mind is originally as fertile as another and that all are equally susceptible to gardening is not held as stoutly as it once was. So possibly a day is coming when the educators will flatly admit that there are a large proportion of side-hill minds without sufficient top soil to support the intellectual vegetation which they have been trying to sprout there by main strength and force of law.

This being done, there might ensue a great national movement to abandon large numbers of hopeless, submarginal minds, letting them go back to cactus and burdock and save the expensive teaching facilities for

Submarginal Minds

those who show some evidence of a talent for learning.

The country is crowded with thousands of plants, many of them calling themselves universities, dedicated to the proposition that every numbskull, on reaching a certain age, ought to be impounded for a term of years and squirted over with education at public expense.

These collections of buildings have turned out thousands of more or less glorified towel-swingers in recent years, officially certified to be experts in nothing more important than play. They are, in fact, no more educated than so many gymnasium attendants of the kind who hang around prize fighters' camps to rub down the lithe, lean bodies of the pugilists and dab their wounds with iodine.

However, they learn to babble about calories and carbohydrates, and when they are dismissed from school at the end of four years it makes them unhappy to learn that play is not a science or an industry, after all, but a form of frivolity for which their fellow citizens need no formal instruction.

The problem of the educated farmer is not the same as that of the educated ignoramus but belongs to the same question. The studious stock raiser was taught all the domestic and romantic secrets of the pig and cow and went forth to raise so many pigs and cows, and such fat and juicy ones that there came a time when his government had to bribe him to suspend his learning and just hold still until the havoc wrought by his education

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

could be effaced by time, money and luck. He came to the point of knowing too much about farming, and the cost of persuading him not to do as he had been taught was greater than the expense of teaching him how in the first place.

There is a strange conflict in the thinking of the educated white population of the South which has always puzzled me.

They hold that the cabin Negro, living off his little patch and handling almost no money from one year's end to another, is a happy man because he is too ignorant to know any better. For a fact, the cabin Negro does seem content, and the political and economic storms which sweep over his part of the land mean nothing to him.

If a Huey Long enslaves White Louisiana the colored brother suffers no loss of his rights because he never was allowed to vote or even care who happened to be his master. Having no stake in the game and no mind with which to wonder whither his country is drifting, he hoes his patch, minds his business and leads, to hear his white neighbors tell it, an ideal existence, free of worry and responsibility.

It would seem, therefore, that the white man needlessly and foolishly scourges himself when he sends himself off to the State university and prepares his mind for a lifetime of wishing and self-sympathy.

But who, then, is the dumb one? Is it the Negro who

Submarginal Minds

guards his own happiness by preserving his ignorance or his white superior who knows the secret of the colored man's happiness yet willfully incurs the curse of knowledge?

There is just one reason why I have never fully believed in the happiness of the Negro field hand. It has always seemed, in view of the white man's well-known propensity to claim the best things in life for himself, that if the Negro were so enviable in his ignorance and poverty he would long ago have been driven out of his little cabin and compelled to live in the big house, go to college, get educated and worry about the government and the future.

Punchy Politicians

THIS IS NO time to propose the creation of a new government bureau, but there is need for one more board or commission, corresponding to the New York Prize Fight Commission, with arbitrary power to retire statesmen from public life when they begin to mumble in their speech and rock on their heels. The Prize Fight Commission performs a merciful function in this respect, quietly picking up the licenses of pugilists who manifest symptoms of the ailment known as fighters' dance and easing them into the less strenuous and less dangerous work of toting buckets for other fighters, refereeing and peering through peepholes to scrutinize customers coming up the stairs at gambling houses. Almost all who are thus retired holler persecution, but few men know when they have enough to drink, and, similarly, not one fighter in a thousand knows when he is punch-drunk, which is a harsh but fitting word for it. And, there are many statesmen who stick to politics far beyond their prime, to their own detriment and the detriment of the grand old game of fighting for the

Punchy Politicians

people's rights. There are statesmen who become politically punch-drunk but never realize their condition and wind up broke, decrepit and friendless in their home towns or haunt the halls of Washington where they once were mighty men, starring in the main events. Often, at the big fights in the Garden, old champions who long to take the ring for just one more cheer before they die crawl out of the shadows of the tunnel and make to climb through the ropes to challenge the winner, and old politicians become victims of the same mental state.

It were better for many statesmen that they be arbitrarily ruled off, than that they be permitted to hang around beyond their day, losing their judgment and their sense and passing up opportunities to turn square and enter legitimate business until it is too late. This thought occurs to many of the statesmen themselves, although few act upon it. Like the lure of one more old-fashioned to a never-go-home, sitting the night away in a little place somewhere, or the fascination of just one more fight to a stuttering relic of the prize fight trade, the temptation to run for office just once more lures them on to tragedy.

A lame-duck statesman of my acquaintance took his defeat to heart at first and moped for a week, until he met a Southern Senator, who congratulated him.

"I envy you," the Southern statesman said. "You have been in the Senate six years, and six years are better than sixty. You have been a United States Senator, if there is any glory in that, which, of course, we doubt,

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

and nobody can ever take that away from you. I have been here for many years, but I have been no more a Senator than you.

"You go back to your law practice, but I have been away from my home town so long that if I were to go back today nobody would know me, and I could only hang out a shingle up a flight of gritty stairs, and sit for customers, at two bits each, payable in cash, eggs, garden truck or hog-side. Congratulations."

The Southern statesman was exaggerating somewhat, for he has been a faithful ham-and-egger in politics, and the game doubtless would take care of him a little better than that. The game would find him a place to snooze in the shade as minister to some barefoot republic, with a few thousand a year and boys to fetch him juleps, or a place on some commission to sit in a room and yawn and reach inside his shirt and scratch, listening to college professors' views. These jobs and places on the Federal bench are the political equivalent of the workless tasks which a grateful game provides for the broken-down pugilist, timing knockdowns at the Elite in Gloversville or peering through the keyhole at the customers coming up the stairs.

Do not challenge my assertion that statesmen do come down with a very definite form of the mumbles, which is another name for fighters' dance, because Washington is full of horrible examples who stayed on to become political rockers, rocking on their heels, like old-timers

Punchy Politicians

in the lobby of the Garden on fight nights. They are more noticeable in the Garden than in the lobby of the Chicago Stadium, but that is because the designers of the Stadium played the boys a cruel and cynical trick. They canted the Stadium lobby in a steep incline to the door, so that when the boys stand around and rock, they rock themselves gradually down hill and presently out onto the sidewalk. The Garden lobby is a flat lobby, and so are the floors in Washington, so the boys do not rock themselves away.

Contrary to popular belief, there is very little money in either game, politics or prize fighting, for the average performer. The mediocrities wind up broke, and it is the political leaders who never run for office that make money out of politics, just as the managers and promoters, who never put on a glove or grind a pebble of resin with their soles, make the fortunes in the ring.

A political plucking board to retire statesmen in good time would save the statesman many a heartache and, by maintaining a higher degree of intelligence, enthusiasm and idealism in public office, would confer benefit on the Republic, too.

Broke

MONEY is only clam shells or metal discs or scraps of paper, and there are treasures of the heart and soul which money cannot buy, but most people, being broke, are unable to keep this in mind and sustain their spirits. When a man is down and out and on the street, unable to get any job at all, something happens to his spirit which can be observed in the droop of his shoulders, the set of his hat, his walk and his gaze. He cannot escape a feeling of inferiority among people with regular employment, even though he knows they are definitely not his equals in character, intelligence or ability.

These people—even his friends—feel, on the other hand, a sense of superiority and regard him, perhaps unconsciously, as a casualty. He may borrow for a time, but not enough to carry on in his accustomed way, and he cannot continue to borrow very long. But borrowing in itself, when a man is borrowing merely to live, is a depressing experience, and the money lacks the power of earned money to revive his spirits. Of course, none

Broke

of this applies to bums or habitual ne'er-do-wells, but only to men of normal ambitions and self-respect.

Women in the same predicament must be different. We somehow do not think of women at all in considering the down-and-outers. They are scarce in the bread-lines, they rarely are seen begging on the streets, and they are not recognizable in crowds by the same plain signs which identify busted men. Of course, I do not mean the shuffling hags of the city streets who are the opposite number of the confirmed male bums. I mean reasonably young, decent and intelligent women. There must be many of them, but their despair is not apparent. Maybe they kill themselves.

When a man is down and out he has time on his hands for brooding. He may travel miles to see a man about a job and discover that the job is filled or that it is one of those jobs with no base pay but only a commission on the sale of some useless knickknack which nobody would buy, except out of pity. Turning that down, he finds himself back on the street with nowhere to go but just anywhere. So he walks and walks. He gazes into store windows at luxuries which are not for him, and feels inferior and gives way to people who stop to look with an active interest. He wanders into the railroad station or puts himself down in the library to ease his legs and soak up a little heat, but that isn't looking for a job, so he gets going again. He may not know it, but his aimlessness would give him away even

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

if the very lines of his figure did not. He may be well dressed in the clothes left over from the days when he had a steady job, but the clothes cannot disguise the droop.

He sees thousands of other people, bookkeepers or clerks or chemists or wagon hands, busy at their work and envies them from the bottom of his soul. They have their independence, their self-respect and manhood, and he simply cannot convince himself that he is a good man, too, though he argue it out and arrive at a favorable verdict hour after hour.

It is just money which makes this difference in him. With a little money he would be himself again.

Some employers take the most shocking advantage of people who are down and out. The agencies hang out little colored cards offering miserable wages to busted men—\$12 a week, \$15 a week. An \$18 a week job is a plum, and an employer with \$25 a week to offer does not hang the job out in front of an agency on a colored card. I have a want ad clipped from a local paper demanding a clerk, a good, clean penman, to take telephone orders for a sandwich shop from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M. for \$8 a month—not \$8 a week but \$8 a month. The ad says also, "State religion." Can you imagine the brutal effrontery of any one who demands a good, clean penman for 11 cents an hour inquiring into the victim's religion?

When Edward VIII abdicated he left England broke,

Broke

without a shilling in his pocket. Broke he was on a dole of \$100,000 a year, or \$2000 a week. He will never know what it is to walk the street trying to pretend that he is going somewhere, and just walk and walk.

Trying on a Shoe

M_{RS.} ROOSEVELT in her column speaks of a colleague with a caustic pen and says, "I frequently read him because it entertains me to see how things may be twisted, according to your own bias and your lack of knowledge and understanding.

"If you believed him," she writes, "you would be deeply depressed about human nature, not only in the individuals whom he mentions but in the feeling you get of general cynicism about people."

It took me some time to figure out who this was, but after a while I got it, and interviewed the man in question, who said he supposed the most caustic of his remarks in recent months had dealt with the Second Louisiana Purchase. He said he had written as much in sorrow as in anger about this deal, because he had believed in President Roosevelt and had personally resented Huey Long's shocking insults to him in the Senate and on the air in the early days of the New Deal.

He had seen Huey's dictatorship in action, with troops, plain-clothes sluggers and all; had seen a genteel

Trying on a Shoe

woman arrested and taken to the town jail in Baton Rouge because she dared to approach the State Capitol to present a petition to the Legislature. He didn't believe Mr. Roosevelt ever would compromise with men capable of participating in such crimes against the American form of government.

When a number of Huey's men were indicted on charges of violating the income tax law he was all for that and thought the indictments were strictly on the level.

The disillusionment came when, after Huey's death, the remaining indictments were dismissed with the explanation that there had been a change in the atmosphere. Our subject may have lacked certain inside knowledge of the transaction, but to him it looked as though there had been a most cynical misuse of the courts one way or another.

He reckoned that either the indictments were obtained for political purposes or dismissed for political considerations, and it wasn't he but a Louisiana politician, one of Huey's most notorious operators, who called the compromise the Second Louisiana Purchase.

A correspondent of *The New York Times* was talking to this man and had asked him how he and the boys were getting along with the administration and the man said, "Oh, fine, fine. Haven't you heard about the Second Louisiana Purchase?"

Cynical? Well, doesn't that kind of cynicism breed cynicism?

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

Our subject said he hated all forms of dictatorship and explained that that was why, to the best of his ability, he had opposed Father Coughlin, Doctor Townsend, and Gerald Smith and defended Mr. Roosevelt against them in the last campaign. He was against special privilege, too, and the abuse of power by persons in office, particularly high office.

And then he found listed as a progressive statesman of the new South, and one of Mr. Roosevelt's most devoted supporters, Senator Ellender, of Louisiana, who had sat on the throne in Baton Rouge as Speaker of the House and helped Huey railroad through all the rough stuff of which the dictatorship was made. And for another he found listed Senator Theodore Bilbo, of Mississippi, who frankly admitted with a mischievous grin that he had drawn \$6000 a year in Washington for reading and clipping newspapers and magazines at a time when everybody was supposed to be scrimping and saving to provide eating-money for the poor.

Well, then came that holding company and incorporated yacht business. Our subject has no litch for millionaires, and he thinks a million is more money than any one needs or deserves, but Mr. Roosevelt personalized this matter, and then it turned out that the law had long recognized the holding company as a legitimate thing.

So individuals who had done nothing wrong were smeared by a personal suggestion from the President that they had done something immoral or unethical, or

Trying on a Shoe

both. Quite a few of these individuals just happened to be political opponents of the President ; so again it looked as if some one was trying to coerce people into line.

And our subject thought that inasmuch as the President personally had insisted on giving the public a peek at other people's affairs, he should have laid down his cards, too, and those of his boys Jim and Elliott for every one to see. Why not?

Our fellow said he sincerely admired Mrs. Roosevelt, and much regretted any unhappiness which he might have caused her, because he sincerely believed that she never used her position to obtain advantage or to punish an enemy. But he said his cynicism was due to events. He didn't make the events cynical.

Trees

I DON'T KNOW what can have come over the trees up our way, but certainly they lack the rugged self-reliance of their ancestors which lived in the forests and fought it out. The tree doctor makes his final rounds every fall, and he has been discovering alarming symptoms in some of them. He thinks the little maples should be wrapped in burlap spirals, something like a colic band or the French soldier's flannel sash, and he says they apparently haven't been getting the right kind of food. Too acid, and the result is indigestion, malnutrition and a rash on the bark. So he wants to change the formula to something milder and keep a sort of clinical chart on them next summer to see how they do.

The willows are all right, except that they seem to have been growing too fast and probably ought to be cut back slightly so that they will come on to strong, healthy maturity, neither too tall nor too stumpy.

The willows had the borer two years ago and nearly died, but the diagnostician caught it in time and

Trees

brought in the surgeon, who operated at once. The bark has almost closed over the wounds now and the danger seems past, although we are still advised to paint the scars with antiseptic every so often. It keeps out infection.

The only tragedy on the place since the two black cherries were suddenly stricken, and died in spite of all that science could do, is the big swamp maple. This is a stout old tree which has been failing for two years, and the doctor, after poking around in the earth, decided that the man must have ripped off a couple of big roots when he was moving some boulders with the steam shovel. He is watching its blood pressure carefully.

However, there has been a little pile of sawdust, about a double handful, on the ground near the trunk, and this indicates the borers again. We suggested feeding it some strong, wholesome tree food and, though we dreaded the thought of an operation, we were willing to chance even that if it could do any good.

"No," the doctor said, "I am afraid it is hopeless. This is an old tree and its day is just about done. All you can do is make it comfortable these last few years of its life. We can trim it a little and give it some sedative, but that is about all."

The agriculture trucks are up and down the roads all the time, and the tree nurses—half a dozen young men in high lace boots and corduroys—go through the woods taking temperatures, examining the bark for dead,

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

white leprous patches and condemning hopeless trees to death and total destruction for the sake of posterity. If they find a sick elm pretty far gone they write a little death warrant on a card and tack it to the tree. Later on the mercy killers come through and not only cut them down but cremate them.

They don't even want you to keep your own elms for firewood, because the germs can live in a woodpile and attack live elms in the spring.

Such eczemas and tumors, digestive troubles, respiratory troubles and infections as attack the trees these days turn joy to tragedy in the country. We sat up three months, so to speak, with the two black cherries, but they died in our arms, although in the days before the city people went up into the country, nothing bothered them.

They were twins, apparently, and had roughed it successfully for thirty years in neighborly competition with the oaks and pines and beeches. Then suddenly they caught cold and were gone, for all that the specialists could do.

Dogs seem effete, too. We had a pair when I was young that had, all told, about twenty-five pups in a rather full life, all of which lived without medical aid, steam heat, weaning formulas or inoculations. Nor did Peggy—that was the female—ever need the services of an obstetrician.

When her hour arrived she just disappeared into

Trees

the woodpile or under the barn and pupped and, in due course, brought them home herself. But now they have to go to a lying-in kennel and take their calcium tablets, and the pups get pneumonia, and they can't eat rabbit, because the fuzz gives them rabbit fever and there are distemper and rabies and all.

But those trees—they are a case. I never would have thought that trees would get so high-strung.

Senatorial Courtesy

IF THIS THING means what I think it means, I hope I misunderstand it.

I refer to the proposition that when any member of the United States Senate is nominated for a place on the Supreme Court, Senatorial courtesy requires that he shall be confirmed without a struggle on the ground that he couldn't be a Senator if there were anything wrong with him. This would be an assumption of virtue and fitness in violent disagreement with much past observation of the body which is sometimes called, but invariably with a smile, the most exclusive gentlemen's club in the world.

It would far exceed the degree of confidence expressed by the electorate whose verdict in many cases is merely that the people's choice is the least offensive of a bad lot, but never that he is perfect.

By and large, the reputation of the Senate is distinctly better than that of the Chicago City Council, for example, and the boys may take such pride as they like in the fact that their composite police record compares

Senatorial Courtesy

favorably with that of any other body of similar age and size, if it does.

They took firm steps, as the saying goes, a couple of years ago, with an elderly employee of the Senate who made a few dollars by writing a magazine piece in which he tossed off the ambiguous compliment that there were fewer crooks in the Senate than one might suppose.

It was difficult to arrive at this suppositional figure, and, anyway, the remark was so phrased that in dissenting from it the elder statesmen had to be careful lest they seem to argue that there were more crooks, not fewer. They got around it, however, and their honor and dignity were vindicated by their own verdict, but they still failed to convince the country that membership in the Senate was conclusive proof of honesty, much less wisdom.

The Senate is what it is, and we all know just about what it is, which is another way of saying that we know it contains a large proportion of graduate county prosecutors and big-time machine politicians.

Some of its members are appointed by Governors belonging to a very low order of political life, and there have been such appointees, in addition to certain elected members, whom no courtesy, however generous, could clothe with an appearance of decent conscience, dignity or principle.

Yet the theory advanced in the discussion tardily aroused by the confirmation of Hugo Black would hold that any one holding down a seat in the Senate is above

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

rejection or even serious inspection on grounds of courtesy alone.

That is carrying nice manners to an extreme the folly of which has been demonstrated in the confirmation of a liberalizing force who belonged once, if he does not still belong, to an organization of night-riding terrorists.

Members who voted for Mr. Justice Black admitted that they did so on second-hand assurance that he did not belong to the Ku Klux Klan and that they would have turned him down had they known that he did belong. But they did not violate Senatorial courtesy to the extent of putting the question to him, preferring, instead, to rely on his own appreciation of that courtesy by which they set so much store themselves.

Any man not a member of the club, however, would have been required to answer direct questions, and the Department of Justice, which also waived its normal duty in an extension of the Senatorial courtesy toward Mr. Justice Black, would have combed his record from his kindergarten days to make sure that he never canned a dog, whispered in class or dumped over a little edifice on Hallowe'en.

All this begins to mean that henceforth, if the Senate still insists on the same rule of courtesy that gave Senator Black a base on balls, it will be against the public interest to select a Supreme Court Justice from the United States Senate.

Perhaps, looking around their membership and re-

Senatorial Courtesy

membering some of the things that they know about each other but never mention, they will now change the rule to preclude regrettable impositions on their mutual politeness. Courtesy between members of the club is all right within limits, but there comes a point where it amounts to something much worse than mere discourtesy to the country.

That Man Is Here Again

POUNDDRIDGE, N. Y. — That man from the government has been around again in our neighborhood, away from it all up the country, insisting that we need a farm-to-market road, and our citizens are up in arms about the matter. He was around a couple of years ago, and we chased him off, but he curled his lips in a sinister leer as he went and said:—"You haven't heard the last of this, my fine friends. Nobody can defy the United States Government."

We all thought the matter had just been allowed to drop, but apparently some one has been going over some old papers in Washington, and that man is here again.

We haven't got any farms up here away from it all, and Ernest Schelling, the grocer at the center, buys all his tomatoes and parsley and such things from the big market in New York. But the man claims we have got to have a farm-to-market road, even if he has to import a farmer from Kansas and build a market himself.

The neighbors don't want the road, because it would

That Man Is Here Again

draw traffic to their seclusion, which is what they came to the country for, and the supervisors are playing the chill for the proposition, because the town would have to pay for the land, which would run up the taxes and get them in wrong with the voters.

Some of the neighbors knowing that I go down to Washington pretty often have called around to ask if I can't use a little pull to get that man called off and sent to South Dakota with his farm-to-market road. But you can just imagine what drag I have after needling Mr. Big about his income-tax exemptions and Jim Farley about the political poor-box robbers stuck away in soft jobs.

I used to get an occasional friendly letter from Harold Ickes, but the last time I saw him at the Gridiron Dinner he pulled a sour puss on me and walked away, so I guess he must be sore, too. So, probably, if I should go around trying to get them to call off that man and drop his farm-to-market road into some State that has a farm and a market they would call a huddle and build another Golden Gate Bridge in front of my place.

This farm-to-market road is going to cost \$100,000 or so, as near as we can figure, and we are fixing to build a new school which would cost just that, so I said to one of the boys on the town board, "Why don't you ask the guy to skip the road and build the school instead?"

But he said, "No, I asked him about that, but he says it has got to be a road, and it has got to have a farm at

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

one end and a market at the other. So I told him we didn't have any farm or any market, and he said, 'One radish is a farm, if it comes to that, and one road-side stand is a market, if it buys the radish, so don't be trying to evade the law with technicalities having the color of legality. That is the way with you lousy rich all the time. You haven't got the first instinct of good citizenship, trying to sabotage our beloved President.' "

The last time the man was around, a couple of years ago, there was quite a lot of excitement in our neighborhood, because he went sneaking around disguised as a college boy selling magazines and poking his nose into backyards for evidence of farming.

He found several places where they were growing a tomato or a corn and claimed these were all farms, but our people got a lawyer and made affidavits that these were pets, and there was a ruling of the Supreme Court that pet vegetables do not constitute farming in the meaning of the law. But just to play it safe everybody has refrained from growing any suspicious vegetation ever since, and still here the guy is again with his road, and now the neighbors all look on one another with suspicion in fear that some traitor has planted a mess of greens constituting a farm.

I suppose there is a lot in the way you treat these people, and maybe it was a mistake to run him off so abruptly the other time, arousing his personal spite, but, after all, his approach wasn't any too tactful, either.

That Man Is Here Again

He just came in and said, "Where do you want the farm-to-market road built?"

Citizenship and government are getting terribly complicated, anyway. About that school, the way I understand it, we were going to build a nice school for \$40,000, but somebody discovered that the State won't share the burden unless you spend at least \$100,000 for the school. So I suppose we are going to build a \$100,000 school instead of the \$40,000 one and load the poor kids down with two and a half times as much education as they need, and probably give them brain fever.

It's always something, isn't it?

On Capital Gains

LIKE THE touchback and the safety in football, income and capital gains look so much alike that ordinary people can't tell them apart. We are told that income is safely taxable, but that if capital gain be taxed the capitalistic system will die of eating the meat off its own bones—a disagreeable way of ending it all, to be sure.

By a mental concentration that is downright muscular, some of us can follow the argument as far as the place where the harassed and frantic Mr. X discovers that when he dies the government will not only take his entire estate but sue his unfortunate, busted heirs for \$149,000 deficiency caused by the forced liquidation of his property and the inclusion of bad debts as taxable assets. In conceivable cases, what with one tax and another, pitched in the topmost register, the widow of a penniless man may be better off than the relict of a dead magnate noted for his monogrammed pajamas, his wine and his pillared house in the suburbs.

On Capital Gains

I have been reading, however, a hypothetical case, intended to raise alarm, which leaves me calm and also convinced that a mere definition might be used to excuse from taxation persons who by any rule of justice should not be allowed to ride free.

Here is the case:

Mr. A buys some shares of stock for \$200,000 and in the same year sells them to Mr. B for \$400,000. A few months later, however, Mr. B doesn't like the look of the market or needs some money to settle a little matter about a girl and sells the stock back to Mr. A for \$200,000. Plainly Mr. A has made a profit, or gain, as he insists on calling it, of \$200,000 within a year on which he would have to pay a tax of \$97,000. He thinks he shouldn't pay this tax not merely because he wants to keep the \$97,000 but also because he says there has been no increment. Mr. A has \$200,000 more, but Mr. B has \$200,000 less, and Mr. A thinks that the \$97,000 taken from him and squandered on wages for government press agents or for actors to paint their faces and chew language at night represents a living, quivering hunk gouged out of the economic body of the nation. His objections are partly patriotic, and I don't want to hear any jeering at this point because Mr. A is mine. If you want to jeer, go get one of your own.

Now it is my point that whether this \$200,000 profit is income or gain makes no difference as long as a man

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

making \$3000 a year and working for it and producing wealth by his work is required to pay an income tax on that. Mr. A makes the point that in his dealings with Mr. B there has been nothing produced. But, whatever the economics of the case, justice demands that Mr. A toss his fair, proportionate dues on the blanket along with \$18 contribution of the \$3000-a-year man and quit rolling his eyes about patriotism. If he didn't work for his \$200,000 gain, and if nothing was produced, that was a pretty soft touch for Mr. A, and he ought to be glad to get over the fence at the end of the year with a profit of \$103,000 for sitting on his dead porch in some broker's office watching the numbers dance by on the electric tape.

While he was sitting in the broker's trap and while he was dining on fancy meats and heavy gravies all year long and worrying about his country our \$3000-a-year friend, whom we will call Mr. C, for chump, was punching the clock, taking a lot of mouth from overbearing customers, fretting about the kid's tonsils and the payment on the jaloppy and gnawing the stringy ends of the tough cuts. How do you think you are going to sell Mr. C the idea that he ought to pay an income tax because he is a producer but that Mr. A may be taxed only at the peril of the nation because his \$200,000 gain represented no increment?

I understand that in certain phases the capital gains

On Capital Gains

tax is a terrible thing and should be fixed while the Star-Spangled Banner yet waves, but Mr. A's case and all others like it call for a special clause to bar the door. Catch him, men!

The Last Frontier

MIAMI.—It may be a morbid imagination that gives me to think of such ominous live stock as venomous snakes and alligators on the loose when I find myself amid the gaudy luxury of the Florida coast, where the ball players come to take on their early sun-burn, the golfers shoot their golf and fishermen use little fish the size of billygoats as bait for fish the size of cows. However that may be, the contrast between life as the pleasure people see it in the winter along the shores of the Atlantic or the Gulf and life as the Florida cracker and the Seminole Indians live it in the depths of the Everglades is one which suggests itself whenever a broken-English waiter goes down the aisle swinging a silver cooler, with a golden bottleneck protruding out of the shaved ice.

“Here, on the spot at this moment,” says the morbid imagination, “but for the mad enterprise of the railroad promoter and real-estate plugger who cleared away and citified a little margin along the shore within the last few years, is jungle or palmetto flat inhabited by

The Last Frontier

rattlers big as inner tubes and cotton-mouth moccasins, and not by any graceful ladies and gents in evening clothes."

There are still comparatively young and active citizens in Miami who came in before the railroad, when Miami was a trading post accessible mainly by trading boat, although it was possible, with difficulty, to come in over a rough road down from E. M. Flagler's ambitious hotel colony at Palm Beach. Now the county jail roosts on the twentieth floor of the courthouse and *The Miami News* of James M. Cox, who ran for President against Warren Harding, hoists a thin tower into the sky, with elevator lights flickering up and down the shaftways at night. And men go traipsing over the land pursuing the golf ball, some of them preferring, however, to take the penalty and lose the ball when a slice drops it deep in the rough. There is no way of knowing what might be coiled beside some sprig of saw grass in the rough, so what matters a few strokes more on a score card, or the price of a little white ball?

I apprehend that the real-estate and hotel people do not wish to emphasize this aspect of Florida, and in justice to their feelings in the matter I will say that the chances of meeting a reptile on Flagler Street or in a hotel lobby are negligible. But much more interesting than the tall buildings and other urban refinements themselves, which are no novelty to the majority of the visitors, who come from large cities, are the recent his-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

tory of the shore and the present existence just behind this luxurious frontier, of a vast, swampy jungle as wild, I take it, as some stretches of the Amazon. It is frequented by a race of Indians, the Seminoles, who, in tribal resentment against many a dirty deal from the white man, have never formally made peace with the United States Government. Herons, cranes and marsh hens by the million; ducks, wildcat, little red deer, 'possum and 'coon, snakes and alligators make the Everglades a happy hunting ground for Indians who go on their bare feet through swamps where the conventional sporting hunter does not venture, even in his ostensibly snake-proof boots. Here the hunter must take a sporting chance with his game. Drop a hook with a piece of red flannel over the side of the boat in the dark water of some canal or lake and the big black bass snaps at it before it is wet. But a snake may come sliding over the gunwale, too, meaning nobody any particular good.

This is the last American geographical frontier, but nobody seems to be in any hurry to exploit its possibilities as a hunting ground, and commerce hesitates to take advantage of its natural resources, whatever they may be, considering the difficulties.

People find themselves very busy having a year's fun in a few weeks in Florida, and one has little time or repose for contemplation of the miracle which has been wrought in establishing the Miami, the Palm Beach, the St. Petersburg and the Fort Myers of today, all since

The Last Frontier

the turn of the century or thereabouts, so close to the primitive jungle that, in some cases, a half hour's ride in any ordinary automobile covers the distance between city civilization and Florida as it was in the beginning.

Much of the land reclaimed during the boom has been yielded back to nature since the developments, or subdivisions, went bankrupt, but much of the gain has been held, too, and is being slowly consolidated now as the young cities mature. Pleasure being the principal industry of these cities, prohibition was frankly and entirely abandoned out of consideration for the paying guests, who otherwise would have gone to Cuba or the British offshore islands to attend to their winter spending. But the criminal population which moved in and attempted to take charge in the wild days of the boom was taken into political partnership and disorder thus was controlled. It is now a recognized element of local society.

Some day some St. Patrick may shoo the reptiles back and back and, finally, out of the Glades, and some new Flagler or McEntee Bowman may build a Biltmore in the jungles. If so, then there will ensue such a shelling of wild game and hauling of fish from crowded waters as has not occurred in this country since the days of the earliest pioneers.

Ah! Mystery of Love!

SOMETIMES I ENVY the profundity of those serious thinkers who read the ideology magazines and know all about the Supreme Court, the Constitution, the Ukraine, Stakhanovism and soil erosion in Tennessee. They do get around, these people, if only in the compass of a 15-cent weekly having neither illustrations nor humor, as such. Yet on those rare occasions when I tiptoe into their solemn company to the extent of buying a copy at the hotel newsstand to while away an evening puzzling out the editorials I have a feeling that in one respect at least I am a very superior man. It seems that these serious thinkers are great dummies on the subject of sex, and I frankly marvel at the advertisements for sex books calculated to teach them homely fundamentals which most adults regard as matters of common knowledge. Somehow ordinary people, living on a lower plane, just pick up this information as they go along and come to maturity with a fair practical understanding of what it is all about. Some get it in revelations from their mothers and fathers, others pick it up from

Ah! Mystery of Love!

older kids who learned it God knows where, and those who lived on farms in their youth can hardly remember a time when they didn't know the score.

We-all, baby-havin', 'tater-hoein', homespun folks of the great American majority—well, stranger, we don't regard sex as any fittin' topic for a book, and it's our view that any grownup man or woman who has got to read a book about it ain't going to be any wiser afterward than what they was before. They just ain't the type, and it seems a shame for any book publisher to take their money at the rate of \$7.50 a copy for the de luxe edition or \$2 for the cloth.

Just on the record, this kind of book seems superfluous except for people to whom it would be useless. The human race has achieved a very ripe age and steady improvement thus far, and no man of any pride will ever admit that he had to turn to Chapter IX to brush up on the art of pitching woo. He would try her with mandolin music, poetry, gin or a good bust on the snoot, according to his own judgment of her susceptibilities, and if he didn't click—well, giddap. But he would have done no better if, having her in a hammock of a summer night, he switched on the light—the bloody fool—to see what the book said about it. That is a time for ad libbing, and if a man has the knack she's his'n.

The learned doctors who wrote these books might be surprised and more than a little disappointed in the human race if they could read a verbatim of some of the

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

gibberish which has been used to close successful deals of this kind. And I would lay something like 8 to 5 that our serious thinkers when they come to a clinch forget their lessons and gurgle and goo like any soda clerk, failing which they might better save their breath.

But perhaps I flatter them. They do seem a gritty, gloomy lot, these brows who write and read cold anatomies of humor and love, and they may be just as grim as they seem. And I do not waive a suspicion that some of these pretentious intellects, for all their Ph.D.'s and their cold approach to a hot subject, like to read such copy for the same reason that dirty-minded people of inferior orders like to pore over dog-eared copies of the standard dirty classics.

As for the female of the species, I have only a mental picture, and that unappetizing. But for that I might invite them to stay after class.

George Spelvin on Housing

GEORGE SPELVIN, American, appeared before the Housing Commission and testified as follows:

Q.—You claim authority on housing? Why?

A.—Well, I built a house, I own a house and I live in a house.

Q.—You built a house? Built it yourself?

A.—No; I mean I paid for building it. I work in an office.

Q.—You think a government housing program would run into trouble?

A.—Well, judging by my own case, yes.

Q.—State your experience.

A.—Well, there was the sewer. The real-estate promoter promised to put in a sewer, but he went into bankruptcy and the sewer wasn't in. He had several corporations. Every time he bought another lot he would form another corporation, and the corporation that sold us our lot went bankrupt. So the sanitary inspector wouldn't let us dig a cesspool and the corporation

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

couldn't build the sewer. So they had a receiver, and after a long time, with our house standing idle, they got things straightened out, but the receiver and the receiver's lawyers had taken all the money. So finally the town built the sewer and taxed us for it.

Same way about the sidewalks and the pavement. We paid for them in the purchase of the lot, but after the little corporation went bankrupt we had to pay for them again, in taxes. The real-estate man still had plenty of money, personally, but this corporation was broke.

Q.—Was there something about a furnace?

A.—Yes, sir. It seems the contractor made a deal with a furnace contractor and he installed an old furnace, just painted over, instead of a new one, as the contract specified. It wouldn't heat and the pipes froze, and then the furnace blew up and we had to move to a boarding house while they fixed it. I had to redecorate the boarding house walls where the children drew pictures with their crayons, all because of that furnace.

Then, when they went to fix the frozen pipes, they discovered that the builder didn't leave that little trap door so you could get at the pipes to fix them. So we had to get a carpenter to tear out the wall and a plasterer to make it over. Meantime, this new plumber discovered that the original plumber had used wax instead of solder on a big joint 'way back under the

George Spelvin on Housing

bathroom floor. That was leaking, too. He could see it with his flashlight, but couldn't get at it, so we had to wreck the floor and rebuild it.

Well, then, the furnace contractor, it seems, didn't have any backing, so he couldn't replace the furnace with a good one. And then the junk man who sold him the second-hand furnace came and got it, claiming he had not been paid for it. That left me no furnace at all. And then the furnace workmen sued the furnace contractor for their wages and slapped a mechanic's lien on my whole house. They said I had no right to let the junk man take the old furnace off the place so they couldn't attach it. I never knew they could do that.

Q.—Any other liens?

A.—I guess you could call them liens. Anyway, some lumber company that sold the builder the shingles served a paper on me because he didn't pay them, although I had paid him.

Then some workmen who worked for the builder on another job served another lien on me, claiming I had to pay them a balance of \$400 which I owed the builder because he owed them some wages. I said I wasn't intending to pay him the \$400 because of all the expense he put me to. But they say I have to pay them the \$400 and then sue the builder for not performing his contract. But he claims he is broke, too, so where do I get off suing him?

Well, we had to rebuild the roof because it leaked,

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

and some walls where the water destroyed the plaster, and now some union stands in front of my house yelling "Scab!" because some of the workmen weren't union. But I didn't hire them. The contractor wouldn't let me. Anyway, that would have cancelled his responsibility.

Q.—So you think the government might have serious difficulty building 3,000,000 houses?

A.—Difficulty! It would be a war.

The commission adjourned *sine die*.

Newspaper Stuff I

ALTHOUGH THE American press is generally admitted, and where not admitted can be shown to be, the best in the world, there have been persistent attacks on it ever since Mr. Roosevelt came to office. The President has led these attacks and has been supported by the New Deal machine and by many newspaper men.

But the only alternative to our kind of press, speaking freely and usually voicing the policies of the private citizens who own the papers, is a controlled press, voicing the policies of the government and suppressing all criticism thereof. Rather oddly, both Russia and the Rome-Berlin axis, which affect to loathe each other, have this kind of journalism.

I have seen no suggestion of any kind of compromise plan by which the press can be cleansed of the policies of the private owners and still be kept free of the political bias of the government, which, in that case, would have the authority to say what might be

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

published and what must be suppressed. I would like to hear how this could be done.

Our system, though the best, still has its faults and abuses. Some publishers are venal and use the freedom of the press to promote their interests and punish their political and economic enemies. But we know also that the other kind, the only alternative kind, promotes the policies of individual rulers, which may be suicidal to their respective nations and does not give the opposition a chance to say a word. Our papers generally do give the opposition its say.

As against the abuses committed by our publishers, many reforms may be cited to the credit of the American press. The papers exposed and thus began the destruction of the Ku Klux Klan, a fight which called for economic courage in most Klan centers and moral and physical bravery in some. The demolition of Tammany Hall in New York was a press victory, and when, finally, it is decided to rescind the tax exemption of public salaries and public bonds, that reform, too, will stand to the credit of the newspapers. The President didn't take up the cause until it had been pointed out—to his embarrassment—that he himself had been a cut-rate passenger on the Ship of State for most of his adult life.

There are hundreds of local reforms which may be cited to the credit of the newspapers, many of them

Newspaper Stuff I

accomplished in the face of boycott or threats of reprisal.

At present the criticism springs from the fact that most of the publishers are opposed to the New Deal's collectivism and corruption. I say corruption because it is admittedly corrupt to buy votes, and the administration has just voted itself the money with which to buy a future for itself. WPA workers and other New Deal employees may say it is insulting to suggest that they vote as they do because they get money for their votes, but politicians are not that naïve. And, anyway, Dear Alben Barkley has tacitly admitted that this was done on his behalf in Kentucky. If there is any insult in this it should be taken up with Senator Barkley, President Roosevelt's straw boss in the Senate.

A straw vote might show that the press opposition to the New Deal is unpopular, but that would not make it wrong. Press criticisms of political machines and policies often are unpopular, and the papers have to endure accusations of hidden motives. But in such cases their privilege puts on them a responsibility to fight on, presenting editorial arguments and citing chapter and verse in support of their contentions. It is possible that some of Mr. Roosevelt's policies are wrong, even ruinous, and that in the future the people will be glad the papers warned them.

But, whether he is right or wrong, what wrong is

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

there in pointing out where he seems to be unwise and explaining why? The people, having read the arguments, will make their final decision, anyway.

One thing to remember is that no party in power ever admits that it is wrong or offers any criticism of any of its acts or policies. That is the task of the opposition party and of the free press.

One criticism of American journalism just now seems to refute itself. It is argued that the publishers are utterly mercenary men, but then it is said that they have promoted the present depression and created a defeatist mood in the people. But would an utterly mercenary man deliberately frighten business and deprive himself of profits, and if it is true that they have no influence, anyway—*vide* the 1936 election—how could they artificially create this mood of defeatism?

Newspaper Stuff II

IN A COUNTRY which has a free press any one who has anything to say may become a publisher. There are practical difficulties, to be sure, but the privilege is there, and it is incorrect to say that the owners of the existing newspapers of the familiar and standardized American pattern possess a monopoly of that privilege. That there are individuals who have a message, or think they have one, who remain mute for lack of paper in which to express their ideas is due largely to their own lack of initiative.

Certainly there are hundreds of persons in Russia, Germany and Italy today who would manage to get their beliefs down on paper and into circulation if those countries offered the same freedom that exists here.

The cost of publishing a standard paper, even in a small city, is enormous, and the business calls for specialized ability in a number of departments—news, editorial, advertising, circulation, purchasing and so forth—which should work together. But a publication

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

intended merely to express a view need not be so complex. It needs no news service, no photographers, no fleet of wagons, no reporters, no advertising department, even, unless the editor and proprietor wants to abandon pure altruism and turn commercial, in which case he is subject to the same criticism and suspicions that are constantly advanced against the so-called newspaper magnates. It has the same mailing privileges that the existing newspapers enjoy, and it has an opportunity to offer those truths which are said to be suppressed.

Unfortunately, even a modest paper requires some money for the printer, and, of course, for the editor's living, but that is just something that cannot be helped. It takes money to start a peanut stand, and the peanut vender has no right to a subsidy for his personal existence from the public treasury.

In this country those who want to express themselves on paper seem to believe that a paper must have comics, recipes, health hints, local and world news coverage and blanket circulation. But in Barcelona about three years ago there were, as I recall the number, eighty publications arguing all shades of political opinion, most of them thin sheets without journalistic luxuries, whose editors wrote with perfect abandon. They weren't getting rich, but they certainly were laying it on the line daily, twice weekly, weekly or as often as they had anything to say or the price of publi-

Newspaper Stuff II

cation. They were constantly disappearing and reappearing, and probably not even a newsdealer could have called the roll at any given time.

Those who complain most bitterly about supervision and over-or-under emphasis in our papers usually are slightly screwy on some ism or hatred and claim a right not only to publish violent communications but to spot them outside, as we say, preferably with a banner head. They want to edit the existing papers, and often when some scurrilous and libellous contribution has been garbaged there will follow a squawk of suppression and a demand for censorship or state regulation, as though that would provide a square deal for all opinion.

A few days' mail of a metropolitan editor would illustrate the point. Letters come in containing the most fantastic general accusations against whole sections of the population, and the editors are always being accused of selling out to various groups and interests for sordid reasons. A single day's mail will charge that the editor is a tool of Wall Street and Moscow, Hitler and Stalin, the Pope, the Jews, the New Deal and the Liberty League. He is an enemy of labor if he prints a piece plainly reporting some skulduggery by some politician or racketeer who is exploiting a union, or deplores an outlaw strike, and the same mail will accuse him of encouraging the Reds when he argues for free speech in some troubled center.

I receive many small publications which if printed

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

in the standard daily papers at all, let alone in Page 1 position, would inflame mobs to commit atrocities against masses of innocent citizens. The fanatic simply has no sense of truth and will write the most dreadful lies and superstitions as fact and fly into a rage if the editor, with a decent sense of responsibility, does not give him prominent space in which to incite persecution of those whom he hates.

I know our press is imperfect, but I know, too, that our daily standard papers are models of objectivity, conscience and fairness as compared with the letters and the ism publications which denounce it for sins apparent in themselves.

Newspaper Stuff III

I COULD go on and on about the freedom of the press. We have had some rogue publishers in our journalism, but the very worst—and you may name your pet abomination—never had the audacity and the power for evil that are presented in the authentic situation which I am going to describe.

A political demagogue and dictator rises to power as the boss of a State machine and starts a little sheet on a job press under a personalized masthead and a slogan promising to make of every man a king or to give everybody \$5000—or something like that. He hammers away at his political opponents and at the orthodox or conventional papers without regard for the libel restrictions which handcuff the other side, because he is, as they say in the business, libel-proof. He hasn't so much as a typewriter by way of physical plant or an attachable dime of money. I don't mean that he hasn't got a dime. I mean a dime that can be attached. There is a great difference. And, of course, nobody wants to go to the gutter with him on a charge of criminal

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

libel, because there is always the danger that he will prove it or prove something else just as embarrassing. Old Jim Watson's remark that nobody ever won a fight with a skunk applies here, too.

Well, for the first few weeks he throws his paper away free, but meanwhile the boys of the organization are soliciting subscriptions with the old blackjack. Every jobholder in the State organization has to pay \$2.50 or \$4, or whatever, and every one of these is required to hustle a certain number of other subscriptions, the individual quotas being based on the individual's public pay. Do you get the idea? If the individual employee can sell subscriptions to his friends, all right. But if he can't he has to buy them himself as a tax on his job.

And, of course, all the contractors who sell concrete and office supplies, tile, prison provisions, school books, pipe organs and band instruments to the State government or to local governments controlled by the State machine buy subscriptions, too, so that in a comparatively short time your struggling little paper, shouting the battle cry of freedom, has a big net paid-in-advance circulation. And now, when the other papers blast him, he blasts back that they are just jealous of his success in journalism and abusing their press prerogative to attack a business rival. If this is freedom of the press, says he, this coloration and distortion of the news, these

Newspaper Stuff III

reckless, insulting charges that his faithful, voluntary subscribers have been coerced, then, by God, he doesn't know but that, after all, maybe the freedom of the press ought to be curtailed or, anyway, intrusted only to publishers who have a sense of responsibility and fairness—himself for example.

For revenue he is doing fine. As a boss of the State, in harmony with the national administration, he counts the WPA workers and employees of other federal activities among his fold, and, of course, all the contractors and supply men doing business in these fields react the same as those who do business with the State.

And there is the advertising. The contractors and supply men all buy space, and manufacturers and merchants find it wise to do the same, not only in the political sense but from the practical viewpoint, because—no kidding—the sheet does have circulation. Never mind how it got the circulation. It's there, paid in advance. Municipalities and counties, water districts, utility companies, even State lunatic asylums and colleges buy space in the dictator's paper, and the free press privilege runs for him because you could no more afford to suppress him, even knowing all about his methods, than you could afford to suppress the most ethical paper in the land, whatever that one may be.

When the national dictatorships develop in countries which go haywire the dictators and sub-dictators

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

are the men who own the prosperous official papers. Mussolini, for instance, and Goering, Goebbels, and Streicher.

I like the commercial American press better.

To the Ladies

IF IT ISN'T too soon to be asking, would some representative feminist be willing to take the floor some time soon and give an accounting of the great improvement in the politics and morals of the country which was sure to follow the emancipation of the enslaved sex?

Is the political improvement to be seen in the record of the late Tammany administration in New York or the reign of Big Bill Thompson in Chicago, or Tom Pendergast in Kansas City, in Huey Long's dictatorship in Louisiana or James A. Farley's practical spoilsmanship in Washington? Is the moral uplift to be discerned, perhaps, in the growing popularity of sexual perversion as a humorous theme for comedians on the stage and in the cocktail rooms in the cities?

It is my recollection that the ladies, with their superior decency, their shrewd intelligence and their pure patriotism, were going to make this in all respects a better country to live in when they acquired the right to vote. This promise was held forth at a time when the

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

males of the country had little to boast of in the way of political cleanliness and the morals of the big cities were decidedly insanitary in certain segregated sections. There were crooks in public office, taking orders from corrupt bosses who needed to be driven out, and such festering spots as the San Francisco Barbary Coast and the Chicago Line were a constant menace to the moral and physical health of the children of the women. When the women got the vote they were going to see to it that their children received decent government from their masters and Vice, the monster, was going to be seriously disabled if not slain.

Up to this time the woman who is active in politics has seemed to be pretty much the same sort of politician as the man, and the enfranchisement of the women appears only to have created that many more Republicans and Democrats. In Washington the woman politician demands her job as a reward for having played the same sordid political game that the men play, and in the wards and precincts she is distinguished from the gents only by her sex.

Certainly she has taken no leadership, with the single notable exception of the fight for the repeal of prohibition in which Mrs. Sabin made good the promise in a limited way, then to retire abruptly as though the whole job of woman had been done. The lady job-holder, as every politician and reporter on the political run is aware, is animated by the same cheap, greedy personal

To the Ladies

ambition that controls the actions of the abominable males, and the lady precinct worker's sole motive in politics is to deliver the vote, elect the ticket and get what is coming to her.

It would be unfair to say that politics is any more rotten now than when the voters began going to the polls in pairs, mother and father, hand in hand, doing their duty as citizens on election day, but if there has been any change in the way of sanitation, that is something which only an expert and an optimist could point out. The ladies voted for Jimmy Walker along with the men; they voted for Thompson in Chicago, Long in Louisiana and the local crooks in Miami, Fla., who have made the city the winter quarters of the underworld. Horizontally, across the entire country, unless I have missed some great improvement which should be brought to notice, political matters, with the women exerting their fine influence, their special honesty and their superior social conscience, are about as they were before.

In the moral tone of the country the influence of woman, now that she is a full partner, has achieved no improvement which is perceptible to the naked eye or ear. On the contrary, it might even be argued that far from elevating the world the girls have been contaminated by their contact with it.

Certainly they do a lot more swearing than was considered decent when they were yearning for equal standing at the polling places, and the heartiest appreciation

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

of the dirtiest songs and repartee of the most depraved entertainers in the polite resorts is pitched in the shrill, alcoholic cackle of plastered but respectable womanhood. At the time when the girls were campaigning for the ballot this sort of humor was considered to be something for the gents only, and any male who had told or sung any such tale in the presence of the girls would have been put down for a cad and, more than likely, for a casualty.

This is becoming serious, because a man wishing to drop in some place for a little stimulant nowadays can never tell but that he will stumble into a roomful of the girls having an afternoon out and hear something that will cause the blush of embarrassment to mantle his cheek.

Probably they ought to put signs over the ladies' saloons, "For Ladies Only." Then if a man should insist on going in he would have only himself to blame if he heard language unfit for male ears.

To Set the Record Straight

IT IS ABOUT time to dispel the myth which would have it that the bootlegger of prohibition times and the man who ran the speakeasy were two of Nature's noblemen. Otherwise this one is likely to be accepted without a contest, along with the older, and, to my certain knowledge, unsound belief that the old-time bartender was the counsellor and friend of one and all.

The old-time bartender may have seemed so at times, but much that passed for patient, human understanding consisted of nothing but a professional habit which bespoke a dumb nature. He was especially loved, mostly in reminiscent writings rather than in person by individuals, for his capacity to listen by the hour to the imbecilic babbling of the rumpots who confronted him from the other side of his cherry-wood counter.

If they cried because they were having trouble at

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

home he looked solemn and threw in a sympathetic "Yes, that's the way it goes," as he ran his rag across the wood and nudged the glasses slightly to suggest that it wouldn't be altogether amiss to have them freshened up a little. If they wished to brag about people they had licked, preferably in some other city and quite a long time ago, he would permit a credulous glint, which was strictly mechanical with him, to light his eye for an instant and say, "Yes, I always heard you were a very good man in a fight."

The very fact that the old-fashioned bartender could stand his trick day after day listening to the prattle of patients who, if they were not half-wits normally, had made themselves half-wits for the time being would imply that he wasn't quite bright mentally himself.

But he had, moreover, his hard, or practical side. He could fumble money around and play chop-sticks on the keys of the cash register, as any old-time saloon-keeper who employed bartenders will testify, and he never should have been accepted into the American mythology without consideration of the fact that he often tapped hopeless alcoholics over the head with a beer mallet and heaved them into the snow.

This I have seen them do and the memory of such incidents involving clamorous stewards who were sickly at best, and plastered as well, in saloons on the south and west sides of Chicago has always hampered me in my appreciation of the old-time bartender's nobility

To Set the Record Straight

of soul. Such conduct is unseemly in one who claims to be the counsellor and friend of one and all.

Among old-time circus people the art of fumbling money is highly thought of. I have been told that the boys used to pay the circus for the privilege of working in the ticket wagons, and the tricks which they played on the innocent hayshakers at the windows are fascinating to hear.

But they were dealing usually with sober customers, and to fumble \$2 out of a sober customer's \$10 note in a ticket transaction required a degree of skill and nerve. It is no trick to hold out on a wheezing lug swaying at the bar, and to do so is certainly no more sporting than the shooting of barn-yard ducks.

The old-time bartender is remembered with particular affection for the soothing restorative which he used to brew for people who did not feel or smell quite fresh on the morning after a difficult night. But in those cases he was only pouring another drink according to another formula. It remains to be shown that any love went into these preparations, but those who did benefit from them have handed on a tradition that the bartender's beautiful, sympathetic soul was the key ingredient.

The fact is that most of the old-time saloons were hot and dirty refuges presided over by bartenders of similar character. It is not too late to correct the fallacy.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

The devil's advocate ought to bring out in regard to the bootlegger and speakeasy proprietor before they are accepted as benefactors of the people, inspired by noble motives, the fact that most of them were criminals by nature or too lazy to work for a fair living and took readily to criminal habits. The mere peddling of the liquor was only the obvious portion of their work. They couldn't begin to peddle it, until they had smuggled it or cooked it or high-jacked it, and these activities asked for a man with a gift for treachery, robbery and murder.

Aside from these few objections, I suppose the bootlegger and speakeasy proprietor may be accepted without protest as Nature's noblemen.

Ex Marks the Spot

ERNEST SIMPSON, of London, the former husband of Dorothea Parsons Simpson and of the Duchess of Windsor, the former wife of Commander Earl Winfield Spencer, U. S. N., the former husband of Mrs. Miriam J. Spencer and husband of Mrs. Norma Reese Johnson Spencer, has married Mrs. Mary Kirk Raffray, the former wife of Jacques Achille Louis Raffray, who has married Mrs. Connie De Bower, the former wife of Herbert De Bower.

Mr. De Bower is the ex-husband of the wife of the ex-husband of the wife of the ex-husband of both Dorothea Parsons Simpson and the Duke of Windsor's wife, the ex-wife of the ex-husband of Mrs. Miriam J. Spencer, the husband of Mrs. Norma Reese Johnson Spencer.

Or, to put it otherwise, the Duke of Windsor's wife is the ex-wife of the husband of the ex-wife of the husband of the ex-wife of Mr. De Bower and four to carry. Or, still otherwise, the ex-wife of the husband of Mr. De Bower's ex-wife is the wife of the ex-husband

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

of the Duke of Windsor's wife, the ex-wife of the ex-husband of the ex-wife of the husband of the present Mrs. Spencer and carry one.

Or, perhaps more simply, Mrs. Dorothea Parsons Simpson is the ex-wife of the husband of the ex-wife of the husband of the ex-wife of Mr. De Bower and, by the same process, is ex-wife of the ex-husband of the Duke of Windsor's wife, the ex-wife of the ex-husband of Mrs. Miriam J. Spencer.

Water won't quench fire; fire won't burn stick; stick won't beat dog; dog won't bite pig; pig won't climb over the stile and the old lady cannot get home tonight.

Mr. Raffray is the ex-husband of the wife of the ex-husband of the ex-wife of the ex-husband of Mrs. Miriam J. Spencer, the ex-wife of the ex-husband of the Duke of Windsor's wife, the ex-wife of Mr. Raffray's own ex-wife's husband, ex-husband of Dorothea Parsons Simpson, and is himself the husband of the ex-wife of Mr. De Bower, whose present status is that of ex-husband.

Take one blue bottle from 99 blue bottles, leaving 98 blue bottles hanging on the wall; take one blue bottle from 98 blue bottles, leaving 97 blue bottles hanging on the wall; take one blue bottle from 97 blue bottles, leaving 96 blue bottles hanging on the wall.

At a formal dinner party a punctilious hostess would have an interesting problem seating all her guests in such a manner that no ex-husband should be placed next

Ex Marks the Spot

to either his present or ex-wife nor any guest next to the present husband or wife of his or her ex-spouse.

Eleven guests present a seating problem, anyway, and it would be necessary to place the present Mrs. Raffray next to the former Mrs. Spencer. The Duke could be seated between the present Mrs. Spencer and Mrs. Dorothea Parsons Simpson. Commander Spencer would be at the left of Mrs. Dorothea Parsons Simpson, with the present Mrs. Simpson on his left and Mr. De Bower on her left and the Duchess to the left of him. (This is a circular table.)

Then comes Mr. Raffray, then the ex-Mrs. Spencer, then the present Mrs. Raffray and finally Mr. Simpson. He would be only one place removed from the Duke, and the Duchess would be next to the ex-husband of the present wife of one of her ex-husbands. Mr. De Bower would be on the left of Mrs. Simpson, the ex-wife of his ex-wife's husband.

This is genteel company, and there need be no embarrassment over this proximity, although it might be advisable in the entertainment after dinner to avoid the game of musical chairs, which might result in confusion.

It has been estimated that if marriage and divorce were extended in the same ratio to the entire civilized population for a few generations and each marriage resulted in at least two children, the world would be just one great, big, happy family.

Meet the ex-wife.

Zone of Quiet

ALL PERSONS who have studied the slip-horn or the saxophone will sympathize with the United States coast artillery in its dilemma regarding the two 16-inch guns at Fort Tilden, N. Y. These guns have been silent for twelve years and were to have been fired recently to determine whether they could shoot, but the test was postponed out of consideration for the neighbors.

A cannon has this in common with certain musical instruments, that it cannot be mastered without considerable inconvenience to persons living nearby. Necessity, that prolific mother, has produced a silent piano keyboard which emits only dull, fuzzy thumps for the convenience of concert artists on tour who might otherwise be tossed out of their hotels for annoying their fellow guests, free of charge, with the same music which the guests would have to pay money to hear under formal conditions behind the turnstiles. But the same mother has been unable to do anything worth while for those who attack the more raucous types of horns because

Zone of Quiet

experience has confirmed the finding of Weber and Fields that wind which goes in ever so sweet may still come out ever so sour.

Practical trial and error is the only system by which the patient may learn to produce sweet wind out of a horn and, for this reason, trombonists, saxophonists, cornetists and clarinetists have become a sort of race apart, persecuted, sullen, suspicious and defensive. It will be the sincere hope of those who believe in a strong national defense that the coast artillery corps will not be reduced to the same unhappy condition.

Yet the only certain way to discover whether a big gun has developed a fadeaway, outcurve or hop on its fast one is to shoot it now and again. This cannot be done without considerable noise and vibration in the immediate neighborhood of the piece, all contrary to the composure of the neighbors and the safety of the souvenir teapot which was won, at considerable expense, at the Japanese roll-the-ball fake on the boardwalk at Atlantic City when the gentleman and lady of the house were bride and groom.

Practical firing may be reduced to a minimum and theoretical tests may serve certain purposes between times, with crews going through all the motions and a sergeant to yell, "bang," in a modulated voice, calculated not to wake the baby. But one shot per gun every twelve years can hardly be condemned as excessive gun-play and the warriors of the human race have become so bold

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

that it is taking a long chance to depend on an enemy's being put to rout by a sergeant's cry of "bang."

There are battles on record which were won by the intimidating power of suggestion, the Russians claiming to have bluffed the Turks one time by the mere sight of a pile of cannon balls so big that common sense should have told them that no artillery then existing could heave them. If the military men of the world were still as naïve as that, then Hollywood would become the American Krupps, for there is no place on earth where such convincing illusions may be wrought in such materials as wood, canvas and paint. Visiting one of Mr. De Mille's Biblical sets one afternoon in Hollywood your correspondent jerked with might and main to lift a studded iron war-club and nearly fell over backward when the weapon proved to have been made of a few ounces of rubber.

Perhaps a fifty-fifty proportion of dummy artillery would have some effect on an enemy just as the same proportion of dummy musical instruments in a big band was found feasible by some of the noted American maestros in the era of the amusement park bandshell. But there must be some guns which are capable of shooting veritable missiles over a distance of land or sea and with reasonable accuracy. The baseball addict may regard a change of pace or a right-angled downer as a thing of rare beauty, but there is a time and place for everything and a gun in time of war is not admirable for those

Zone of Quiet

qualities which may elevate a pitcher to the status of national hero, pro tem.

Their fellow citizens will sympathize with the residents of the region of Fort Tilden who silenced the guns for a still longer time after twelve years lest the noise disturb the afternoon repose of little Shirley. But there were little Shirleys ten years ago and there will always be some. In the meanwhile the coast artillery corps may be permitted an honest professional curiosity as to whether their 16-inch rifles have developed a slice, hook or foozle.

When Mussolini forbade the yodel, the native cry of the Austrians in certain parts of the irridentist country, the wily Austrians outsmarted him by yodeling the Italian national anthem.

The coast artillery might fire the guns some night and explain, when the Colonel is called before the Judge, that they were just shooting "Rockaby Baby."

Pot and Kettle

CELEBRATING THE twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Soviet Republic, Alex Troyanovsky, the Bolo Ambassador to our midst, horned a note of wholesome indignation when he declared that aggressive countries have been employing various degraded elements of the Russian population to conspire against the national form of government. This complaint comes with equal wrath and frequently from both Bolshevik and Nazi and in just about the same words, and the remedy is the same in both countries. It is a sad state of affairs, to be sure, and Americans can easily understand the annoyance of both, but American sympathy will be meager in view of the fact that Bolshevik and Nazi not only conspire against each other but also have energy to spare for conspiracies against this country's form of government. The Bolos foment riot in labor troubles ashore and hell afloat in the merchant marine in a directed effort to cripple and discredit the United States at sea. And the Nazis conspire through their mock-American bunds to protect us from Communism, though the

Pot and Kettle

disease and the cure are one and the same in the practical effect on the victim.

It is interesting, though not at all strange, to hear a Bolo sound off against conspirators, against any one's form of government, considering the conduct of the Communists among us who get their inspiration from Moscow. The protest shows the supreme gall of the Bolshevik mentality, which was the model adopted first by the Italians and then by the Germans as a defense against Communism. Now that they are alike, the Bolos on one side and the Nazis and Fascists on the other, the Russians are embarrassed to find that their idea didn't work. And the other two are equally humiliated to discover that in their fury to put down the Russian type of terror they forgot themselves and rolled in the same gutter with the enemy, where all are now at home. The Soviets, in the words of the angriest Communist of them all, Leon Trotsky, whose judgment should count for much, have failed to preserve their Communism and have become merely a nationalistic regime of terror. Not that he, of all people, should object to a few thousand executions more or less, for Ex-Comrade Trotsky was no green hand at throwing dissenters into cisterns and dropping rocks on them when he was boss. However, he does seriously complain of the formal abandonment of the export trade in Communism which has left the world revolution in the United States in the hands of independent operators, who deal in a spurious article similar to Nazism.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

But while Communism in Russia has turned toward Fascism as Trotsky says and as Andre Gide and other disillusioned Communists sadly admit, the two big Fascist countries have irresistibly been forced to make concessions also. Each system has borrowed from the other to make both practically alike, and the present basis for their hatred is not a difference of government but chagrin.

"The smallest protest, the least criticism," says Andre Gide in his mournful book on the U. S. S. R., "is liable to bring the severest penalties and, in fact, is immediately stifled. And I doubt whether in any other country in the world, even Hitler's Germany, thought be less free, more bowed down, more fearful, terrorized, more vassaled."

And he says, too, that the spirit which today is held to be counter-revolutionary is that same revolutionary spirit which twenty years ago, on the day that Comrade Trojanovsky celebrated in New York, broke down the rule of the Czars. So Russia would appear to have joined Nazi Germany in putting down true Marxism, and, that being so, it is downright pathetic that they can't have a meeting of the minds to see that they are not enemies but brothers in the same lodge, though using slightly different high-signs, and for the love of God quit their incessant bellowing and give the rest of the world an hour's peace.

Missionary Workers

THEY WILL not realize as much, but Barbara Hutton, Tommy Manville, Billy Leeds, the current Marshall Field and about a hundred upper and lower case Astors, Vanderbilts and Goulds and their parasite in-laws and offshoots have been the most powerful propagandists of all in the preparation of that which the public calls its mind for Mr. Roosevelt's share-the-wealth or sock-the-rich program. By their conduct they have been asking for it, and, though they may resent the clamor for higher inheritance taxes and higher rates on big incomes, the President has reason to thank them for doing the missionary work.

Next to them might be ranked the society reporters of the big city papers and, close behind them, the syndicated Broadway columnists who during the last few years have faithfully reported the frivolities of the scions and scionesses of the great American fortunes.

Park Avenue, Reno and Palm Beach, Saratoga, Belmont and Louisville, ashore in the night clubs and pubs, afloat in big fat boats, racing their stables of thorough-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

bred plugs which feed on finger-picked oats while babies pick at garbage cans. A polo string for Prince Mdivani, plus a palace in Venice and a racing cruiser, while the Canadian manager of the five-and-ten chain is explaining to a Parliamentary commission why it was that he reduced by 10 per cent the wages of the girls who were making from \$7 to \$10.80 a week and the stock of the firm was returning a profit of 20 per cent. He reduced wages because the girls in the United States stores had been similarly reduced. An offer of a thousand dollars a month to the fourth wife of Mr. Manville, who never did a lick of hard work in all his days—"the same," he explains, "as I offered all my wives."

Mr. Leeds is missing overnight in Bahama waters in a sizable boat, big enough to ride out a storm on the ocean but small enough to be hoisted over the side and made fast on board the yacht on which he lives. To maintain Mr. Leeds' yacht with its crew and tenders and fuel and wine thousands of American workmen have to work, when they can manage to beg work from the hiring bosses.

"So-and-So is closing her cottage at Aiken and moving on to Palm Beach for the season."

"The grouse shooting season in Scotland finds many Americans on hand, biding their time until the Mayfair social program calls them down to London."

Who is paying for the world cruise of the American yacht *Dither* and the lively program of entertainment

Missionary Workers

on board but workmen down a hole or children in a mill or girls selling mousetraps, sick or well, ten hours a day, for wages of from \$7 to \$10.80 a week, less 10 per cent, somewhere in America?

Not a mere hundred but several hundred—perhaps as many as a thousand, all told—of Astors, Vanderbilts and Goulds and their in-laws and offshoots have grown up, grown old, idled, frivoled, married, divorced, cross-married, begotten more offspring and died in the luxury of kings at the expense of the people who work in the United States. Many of them were so callous and cynical that they abhorred the United States, except as a source of income, and came home only to see their lawyers about their divorces or other routine business. Paris and London were crawling with them for years.

If it is true that a man who creates a great industry or monopoly thus confers the boon of Progress on America, and so is entitled to a large reward, then for how many generations after he is gone must the working people keep on paying his heirs and their heirs and their heirs in turn for shoving through a railroad or inventing a device to preserve soup in cans, let us say?

Is there never an end to the debt?

But of them all the Hutton heiress has been the greatest challenge to the anger of the people who work to supply income for those whose fathers or grandfathers did some work but who never worked themselves. Her income, her name, are associated with female drudgery

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

under hard conditions, long hours, nickels and dimes, and merchandise made by foreign labor which unjobs American labor. And she hired half a deck of an ocean liner for her first honeymoon and spent her entire married life to that one squandering American-earned money abroad.

Economics be damned! The people are not economists. All they know is just what they feel, and they are feeling sore enough to repudiate these perpetual debts now that repudiation is the fashion of nations.

Essay on Finance

I WISH I KNEW something about money, banking and credit so that I could agree with Jesse Jones, or dispute him just as noisily, on his warning that the banks had better take the rubber band off that blanket roll of theirs and let a few bills into circulation if they don't want to be taken over. But all I know is that the banks have so much scratch, as they call it around the horse yards, that a man who wants to squirrel away a little money for safe keeping these days is treated like a safe-blower or a customer at the peephole of an old-time speakeasy.

They want to know where he got it, why he doesn't spend it, why he doesn't take it to the rival bank down the block instead of picking on them, how long he expects to store it and how long it has been since his last deposit.

They limit the amount he may keep on ice in a savings account, and, further to discourage the fine old virtue of thrift, they pay less than he could earn by betting on a favorite in a New York handbook. It is no harder to wheedle a \$2 touch out of a pawnshop on an old banjo

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

than to persuade a New York savings bank to accept \$10,000 cash money.

And when they print their totals these figures read like the score by innings of a seventeen-inning game called on account of darkness. Yet, as Mr. Jones says and as Harold Ickes complained a few months ago, if a man wants to borrow a double saw to pay his alimony or open a new saloon they bar the doors, man the peep-holes and warn him that at his first false move they will blow him through.

Meanwhile, through Jim Farley's post offices all over the country, Henry Morgenthau is shoving out government bonds on the credit of an institution which is practically in the hands of the sheriff right now, and people regard these bonds as gilt-edge investments even though they know the government's cuff has been scribbled clear up to the shoulder.

People who would holler "Robber!" and storm the doors of a private corporation to demand a reorganization if they saw the chairman bite the end off a quarter cigar have complete confidence in the I. O. U.'s of a concern which, under their own eyes, has built boulevards leading to nowhere at ten times the fair, efficient cost and in Florida pays \$150 a month to a woman to supervise a "survey" of the value of the tourist trade, although the woman's family income is around \$200 a week.

They do this in the spirit of the gambler who played the gimmick wheel because it was the only wheel in town.

Essay on Finance

What else is there to do with money? Put it in insurance, maybe? Then what are the insurance companies going to do for income with so much money around that the banks are almost on the point of charging a fee for dead storage? Put it into action in business investments? All right, what investments, with business men all singing the blues and the administration threatening to use the borrowed money to start a subsidized rival peanut stand to undersell and destroy every private peanut stand in the country?

I just wish Mr. Jones or Honest Harold would tell us some day about some good private industries in which an investment would pay a safe 5 or 6 per cent or some respectable gamble in which the people could get the same action at the same odds that they would face betting on the black or red.

I had some money last year and bought some of Henry Morgenthau's mavourneens through Jim Farley, even knowing that the boys would then turn around and give it away, some of it to busted people in need of eating dollars, but a lot of it, too, to people like that woman who gets \$150 for "surveying" the tourist business, while her husband and son draw salaries from the State. But that's me. I even play slot machines, although I once saw an autopsy on one.

*George Spelvin Thinks
as Follows*

DRIVING TO THE office this morning, George Spelvin, American, thought as follows:

Have to cut that out. No sense to it. Must have had a dozen Scotches besides those brandies in between. Man's an awful fool to do that. Well, I'm through; that's all there is to that. Glad it's never got a grip on me like some guys. Quit any time. Never miss it. Quit dozens of times. Not another drop for six months, anyway. Maybe a year.

Christmas'll be tough, though. Everybody wanting a guy to drink Christmas. Hell with them. It's my health. Ruin it for nobody.

Oo-oo-oo!! Why did I tell that one at dinner? Look at that creeper poking along in the middle of the road. Get over; get over, dope. Costs about \$100,000 a mile to build these roads and some dope creeps along so nobody can use them. Oughta pinch a few. Woman driver, of course. Probably a battle-ax. Um-m, nice. How do you

George Spelvin Thinks as Follows

do? Sneak another look in the mirror. Certainly nice. Oh, well, none of my business.

Keep going, sap, or you'll be late for work. Look at that truck tear. Must be twenty tons. Using regular box cars on the roads now. Crash right along without regard for anybody. I know my rights, though. Better not smash me. Sue for a million.

Gentlemen of the jury, I was driving to work in the morning, doing about thirty-five—no, doing about twenty-two miles—driving cautiously, perfectly alert, perfectly sober—in fact, don't drink. Quit drinking, but don't object other people drinking, gentlemen of the jury. This enormous juggernaut, tearing along forty-five miles an hour, 'way over wrong side of the road, struck me head on. No witnesses, though. What am I going to use for witnesses? Truck chauffeur and helper be sure to claim I hit them. Anyway, their insurance company probably drag me clear up to United States Supreme Court. Lucky to get hospital expenses in the end, after paying lawyers, court expenses and all. Poor guy no chance against corporation lawyers in courts. Dirty crooks—and they talk about ethics of the Bar and sanctity of law. Lawyers fix it so rich millionaires don't pay incomes taxes, but I got to pay \$86, and then they come after you two years later for \$12 more, with 6 per cent interest. Show me where I can get 6 per cent interest on my savings. A racket. Four hundred dollars exemption for a kid. Try keeping a kid on \$400 a year. No

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

exemption for doctor bills, either. Rich corporations charge off depreciation, but no allowance for depreciation of your health. Your health is your equipment, just like factory machinery.)

Motorcycle cop. Go on, you goggle-eyed punk, and pick up some of these creepers and truck drivers. Let sober, alert, cautious drivers alone. Give me a ticket and I'd demand jury trial. I'd say, "Your Honor, this officer is a liar, committing perjury. Demand jury trial. I'm a respectable taxpayer."

Moreover, wasn't intoxicated, either. It happens I don't drink. My word against his and I know my rights. Convict me and I'll fight it to the highest court in the land. Spend a thousand dollars fighting rather than pay ten dollars fine on cop's testimony. Matter of principle. (Need a dictator around here a few months. Clean up the police and courts, crooked politicians, racketeers. Dictator's not so hot if you don't like the guy, though. Some enemy squeals you said the dictator was just a crook, and bang-bang against the wall. Or chop your head off with an ax. Those cockeyed, crazy Dutchmen.

Heil Hitler! Heel Hitler more like it. Ninety-nine per cent vote for Heel Hitler, but strictly one-way ballot. No way to vote no. Chop your head off if you try. No wonder he got 99 per cent. Other per cent dead or in the can. How can those crazy Dutchmen kid themselves that's an election? Just nuts. Gimme the American way.

Gee, getting late. Step on it, brother, or you'll be late.

George Spelvin Thinks as Follows

Let him try to bawl me out. I'll tell him. Forgets the nights I've worked overtime. I'll say, "Does it ever enter your so-called intelligence, Mr. Nilly, that I do two men's work around here and no raise in three years?" I'll tell him plenty.

Just under the wire—Morning, Mr. Nilly.

Rough Riding

THAT MR. ROOSEVELT has his faults I would be among the first to admit under very little pressure, but as a social and political liver-shaker he has had no equal in our time in this country. Ornery, tricky, stubborn, wayward and strong as a bull, he has bucked, wheeled, kicked, walked on his hind legs, tried to mash us against the barn and scrape our heads off under the door in more than five years of continuous plunging, and he apparently isn't even breathing hard yet.

Pull him out of one willful, pesky trick and he will stand there a minute with his head down, showing the whites of his eyes and then go tearing off across the yard hell-bent, rattling our teeth and every bone and joint in our body.

Possibly if we had known what a wild, stubborn critter he was we might have been less willing to take a chance on him in the first place. He looked nice and dressy back there in 1932, and although he did give some indications of unconventional habits, there was nothing in his past

Rough Riding

record to indicate what a cantankerous hide he would turn out to be.

That business about the Forgotten Man and the New Deal was interesting and gave promise of a few novelties, but all candidates, except your consummate Landons and John Davises, have their little catch-phrases, and we had developed a habit of forgetting all such after inauguration. In Mr. Roosevelt's previous political career he never really had a contest in which to show what a hard mouth and iron obstinacy he possessed. On his record it seemed likely that after a little spell of kicking and biting just to signalize his arrival in the White House he would cool out, be nice and back into the shafts like any Coolidge or Hoover.

Instead, however, he went into his dance in March, 1933, and before any one knew what had happened he was lashing out with his heels and shaking us all over the place. NRA, TVA, AAA, CCC he sprang on us before we could catch a fair hold, and while the world was still spinning he started giving people Federal money to mend a leaky sink or buy a new mule, building tailor-made towns in Eastport and Knoxville, digging a ditch across Florida and building a dam to harness the tides of Fundy. The ditch and dam seemed not so good once they were well under way; so, all right, skip them, and what about a new kind of Supreme Court?

He tells us that one-third of the population is ill-housed, ill-fed and ill-clothed, which may be true or an

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

exaggeration. He wants to dictate wages and hours and wipe out the rights of the States, which are largely fictitious or abandoned; he wants to put a roof over every family and a little money in the bank for every one, and he has told the South that the Negro is the white man's enemy only because the white employer uses the Negro to depress the pay and the living conditions of the fallow brother in the faded overalls.

Vindictive, a practical ward politician as well as a big-timer, a sulker and a plotter, he is also showing himself to be a tremendously tough, rough-and-tumble fighter, who will use any hitch that comes to mind, and expects to be used the same way. Any one who gentles Mr. Roosevelt is simply imposing a handicap on himself, for he won't gentle you back—a fact which it took most of us some time to learn at the expense of a very severe jouncing.

Well, he is still wild in many of his methods, and he is not to be trusted with a loose rein for an instant, but in spite of all this he has accomplished some reforms, and, much more important, he has stirred the whole nation for once into an appreciation of the real problems of poverty, unequal distribution, unequal opportunity, dictatorship and the rights and obligations of the States.

Never in our time have people been so conscious of the burden they carry in taxes, of the meanness which a complacent upper class will practice on the help, and of the government's duty to do something real and personal

Rough Riding

for the assistance of those who are so far down that they can't help themselves.

He needs to be fought all the time, for he has an enormous appreciation of himself and of any idea which he happens to approve, but if the country doesn't go absolutely broke in his time it will be a more intelligent and a better country after him.

Picture Hokum

ANY CARTOONIST can justify under artistic license the use of the property skull of a cow in the propaganda photographs of the Dust Bowl which were posed and snapped by the Resettlement Administration to dramatize the New American Desert. Without the skull the pictures would have been meaningless, for we have learned to demand it, in American scenes, just as we demand a cluster of distant palms or a pyramid in a picture of Egypt and a cracked water pitcher in a hall bedroom.

The desert behind the skull was neither more nor less real, for the presence of the prop and the photographer showed some restraint at that, for the formula calls for not less than three bleached ribs along with the skull. It wasn't the photographer's fault that we demand hokum in our pictures as well as in our oratory, and it probably was no fun to go clattering around the country lugging a cow skull along with all the traps which a photographer has to tote in his line of work.

If you think it was, suppose you try packing a cow

Picture Hokum

skull, with two horns, into a suitcase or wrapping it up in a convenient bundle. The suitcase and trunk manufacturers do not produce a cow-skull case. They make form-fitting leather boxes for silk hats and harps and many highly specialized cases for the convenience of magicians, but the problem of the cow skull was unique. It would have been a little convenient if this photographer had been able to unscrew the antlers or fold them over, and you may be sure he was much relieved when he turned it back to the property room in Washington and got his receipt.

In literature they call such things clichés—not skulls, but habits of expression. But, in the monkey house, as the cartoonists' room is sometimes called, they are known as gags.

No picture of the home of a poor family is complete without a little patch where the plaster has fallen off the wall revealing the lath beneath. The cartoon Communist has bushy whiskers, although Earl Browder wears his face nude except a sorrel mustache. The cartoon plutocrat wears a silk hat and a golden log chain strung across a bulging vest adorned with dollar marks, although old Andy Mellon, the boss plutocrat of this country, wore an old fedora which looked as though the cat had been sleeping in it, and was so skinny that you couldn't see his vest at all.

Maybe he wore a wrist watch, too, although, come to think of it, a man of Mr. Mellon's conservative dis-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

position would have been more likely to save the price of a watch and just ask other people what time it was. I have met some other plutocrats who are flat-bellied and hard, spending a little time in the gym every day or twice a week and fit to punch the ears off many individuals who have imagined the plutocrat as a fat and puffy ruin made soft by caviar and turkey. More than likely, plutocrats hate caviar and turkey but go for beef stew.

There is also the workingman in his traditional square paper cap. Did you ever see a workingman in a square paper cap, except printers, who used to roll their own to keep their hair out of their eyes or the grease out of their hair, but now, for the most part, wear those boughten duck-bill caps with the beak ripped off?

If it is a shot of some dashing young scion of society out for an evening in a night club with a scioness the photographers move a champagne cooler up alongside the table for atmosphere, though the pair of them may be drinking Tom Collinses or old fashioned. And, once when Mr. Coolidge went up to Plymouth, Vt., to see his father, the Republicans put him into a suit of overalls fresh from the store, shoved a hay-fork into his hand and appealed to the farm vote with a picture of a hay-shaker shaking hay in a stand-up collar and tie.

For the lack of a little hokum in a picture Jack Dempsey was like to go to prison once. During the war he posed for a picture running a riveter in a shipyard.

Picture Hokum

If he had thought to put on a pair of workman's shoes it would have been all right, but he was wearing patent leather shoes with suede tops, and that error eventually cost him more than \$100,000 in lawyers' fees and all.

Puny Thunder

IN A WORLD going crazy it was no comfort to read that *The London Times*, in a childish attempt to blame some foreign culprit for the national embarrassment caused by the British King's romance with Mrs. Simpson, picked the American press out of the lineup. Not that the American press has anything to regret, because we only recognized and hopped to a great historical event while the British papers, faithless to their responsibility, tried to revoke the truth by suppressing the news of it. The regret and the shame are all theirs, for they shirked a plain obligation of a free press, and the explanation of Lord Beaverbrook and others that they were silenced by law and the facts of the Simpson case looks very pathetic now. The law and the facts of the case are the same today as they were when the British papers ignored history, but they came to the story at last.

However stuffy and pompous *The London Times*, however roundabout its language, the old Thunderer did represent intelligence, character and courage and

Puny Thunder

generally spoke sense. But *The Times* editorial attributing to the American press and public the dangerous trouble with a spoiled King of frivolous habits sounded like something from the pen of Josef Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of Propaganda. As the mouthpiece of a nation whose people are compelled by law to believe the most idiotic denials of plain truth Goebbels has ceased to shock that diminishing portion of the world where reason still exists.

The Times editorial conveyed an unhappy suggestion that the bugs may be carried on the wind. There is no press on earth more attentive to personal news than the British papers in their routine dealings with the royal family and no people with as keen an appetite for journalistic smut. In happy days the British press is largely devoted to ballyhoo for the personalities of the royal set. The papers print its pictures in endless variety, they invade the royal homes to photograph the nurseries of the royal babies, they describe the wedding presents to exhaustion, and their circus treatment of a royal wedding under approved conditions makes the American frenzies over a big fight resemble an ad for a lost dog. A few years ago a popular London magazine published the very personal news that the Duchess of Kent was temporarily out of society because she was nursing her baby herself.

If Edward had selected for his bride a royal Princess, whether from Greece, Holland or Bulgaria, however

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

bad that female's blood, the British press would have been full to suffocation of fulsome special essays by broken-down social figures, eager to exploit their connections for a few quid, and the formal royal announcement would have been preceded by much circumstantial tattle. All such copy, of course, would have been complimentary in the peculiar cap-touching technique which is reserved for royal affairs, but that is not to say that all personal news in the British press is hygienic. They have their dirty personal copy, too, as when some one in society is caught in a gambling scandal or a Mr. X divorce trial. But, generally speaking, they prefer to dig their raw material out of the great American smut deposits of Hollywood, Reno and New York.

The British are one of the few nations that have kept their sanity amid the imbecile gibberings of countries which exhort their people to breed like animals and put little muskets in the hands of children six years old. It will be a lonesome world for the United States if now they, too, go haywire. *The Times* knows as well as we do that Edward showed a preference for night club life, that he is personally obstreperous and, finally, that his trouble, was his own doing. If it were dangerous to the monarchy and the empire that he marry an American twice divorced, that is an affair in which the American press and the personal curiosity of the American people had no initiative. Our papers merely perceived the dangerous and historical complications, and our people

Puny Thunder

showed no more interest in this deeply personal affair than the British showed when the lid was off.

And, anyway, speaking of responsibility, bad taste and the like, what sort of man is this who throws his country into peril at an hour when, as *The London Times* said, events outside imposed a duty to stand as a rock amid the seething tides of Communism and dictatorship?

Hotel Moochery

MINE HOST the hotelkeeper is a nice enough man whose beaming cordiality belies the gnawing headaches of his trade, but I am unable to understand why a business involving such large property values, which insists upon respectable rating in the community, has been unable to break itself of the low and offensive practice of moochery. This refers to the custom of throwing the help in several departments of the hotel business on the variable generosity of the customers with the understanding that they are to live not by wages but by alms.

The hotel trade pretends to considerable dignity, and at least one university has a course of training in which the students learn how many pats of butter in a pound, how many rubber checks in a hundred and how to quell the rejoicing in No. 1206 when the bottles and furniture begin to rain into the crowded street.

Some of our hotel men are important figures, large-scale employers and consumers. They have the tact and

Hotel Moochery

firmness of diplomats; they know the laws which are applicable to their business and many secrets of human nature which most of us are unaware of. Yet the employment policy of the entire trade in those departments where the hired hands come into contact with the customers places both employees and the patrons in an unpleasant and unfair position.

The employee's pay is not fixed, and he may be and often is imposed upon by resentful or stingy guests. The guest, on his part, always is conscious that he is being misused, for when he has paid \$2 for a small sheet of steak, \$1.50 for half a chicken and 35 cents for a sliced orange when oranges are wholesaling at a nickel a dozen, and has paid, in addition, a service charge of 25 cents per head, he is likely to believe he has met his responsibilities. He feels that the boss ought to pay the waiter and reflects that the hotel man would feel outraged if, on buying a suit of clothes, he were required to hand the clerk \$10 and pay the delivery man \$1 for bringing it to his home. Nevertheless, he pays for his food and with the best possible show of sporting gameness hands the waiter something for himself—usually more than the traditional 10 per cent.

Knowing nothing of hotel costs, I do not argue that the prices charged are high enough to enable the management to pay the help fair wages. It may be that the hotel would have to charge even more in that case, but at least the waiter and guest would know how they

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

stood and the unequal distribution of the burden between the shorts and the liberals would be corrected.

Unions have been making progress in the hotel lines, but even the organized houses still preserve the tip or handout system, and no hotel of my acquaintance ever has made an effort to conduct its business in the same way that a department store is run.

I have had some experience in European hotels, where 10 and, in Spain, at least 20 per cent of the total was added to the bill for the pay of the employees. In France an extra 5 per cent was imposed for the cooks and washers, scrubbers and sweepers backstairs who were excluded from the original arrangement. Twenty per cent seemed high, but it would have been acceptable even so if the help had not continued to hang around with their hands out, great files of them swarming out of the kitchens and cellars on checking-out day to mooch a little more with their "Au revoirs" and door openings. And in Naples, notwithstanding Mussolini's edict against brigandage, the bookkeeper reckoned in the date, multiplied instead of adding, and finally wanted to assess 15 per cent for the help on the telephone and cable tolls, which were considerable but represented no service by the employees.

It should be possible for the American hotel man to establish a rate of prices for food and lodgings sufficient to allow his own staff a fair scale and dispel the uncertainty and indecency inherent in the panhandling sys-

Hotel Moochery

tem. This is not Europe and our habits are not European, and, moreover, the hotel business insists on its dignity and importance while preserving a type of mendicancy that would not be tolerated in other lines of business.

I am trying to imagine with what calm generosity a hotel corporation on buying two hundred dozen sheets from the wholesale house or a thousand gross of bath soap would peel off enough money to equal 10 per cent of the price and toss it over to the clerk who took the order.

Those Were the Days

NEXT TIME Mr. Roosevelt or Honest Hal Ickes, the House Dick of the New Deal, or Wallace or Jackson or any of those honorary proletarians who swing towels in that corner of the ring sounds off in disrespect of the Old Deal I would appreciate it if somebody would refresh my memory on just what was wrong with it. Because, checking over my recollections, that seems to have been a pretty fair sort of era, especially by comparison with this New Deal period, and if there was anything to be sore about I want to do my duty.

Wasn't that the time when they were sticking up tall buildings in all the big towns and building swell new suburbs and kicking out new cars by the millions, including some which retailed for around \$6000 and, what's more, selling them? Wasn't everybody working who could or would work? Weren't fight tickets selling for \$55 a copy at the box office and \$100 up at the gyms, and weren't ordinary, forgotten men able to fish up the

Those Were the Days

price of \$25 seats a couple of times a year? Check the files and see.

Remember how it was almost impossible to get a kid to run copy or get a can of coffee for you because they were all over in the corner reading the tape? Not the baseball tape, either. No, pals! They were reading that stock tape and forming little syndicates and buying stuff on margin and making money at it, too.

And Iowa farmers were selling out and hauling away for Southern California and Florida to take it easy, and ditch labor got \$6 a day around here, anyway, and skilled men—some of whom weren't so very skilled, at that—got ten, twelve, twenty.

What do you want to bet that Jim Farley's business has made half as much under this New Deal that he goes around making neck sounds, but not heart sounds, about in duty speeches for the Boss and the Party, as it made under the rotten Republicans?

And taxes! Friend, who ever mentioned taxes in those days?

And if it is a question of wage levels are you telling me that wages are higher under the New Deal after—how long is it—six years than under the Old?

I do remember being pretty sore about prohibition, but, to be fair, it wasn't so bad after bootlegging got organized, and, moreover, we fostered a fine domestic skill in those days which is rapidly vanishing from our civilization now. I refer to the home manufacture of

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

gin, beer and wine. Remember, you got a can of alky and some distilled water and some gin drops and a little bottle of glycerine, and it was as much a part of ma's domestic duties to sling a batch of gin together once a week as to bake a mess of bread back in the nineteen hundreds. All gone now under repeal, and the poor doctors have lost a very reliable source of practice, in addition to which, with much less money, the people have to pay much more for their square face, most of it for taxes, licenses and color-press pictures of pretty models in glove-tight swimming suits in the ads.

Yes, I know, the bankers and speculators and hustlers shoved us a lot of wall-paper stocks and bonds, and everybody was knocked in the creek when the wagon threw a wheel. But you wait and see what happens to Morgenthau's Mavourneens one of these days and then tell me whether, and if so why, it's any more fun to be rooked by a political party and a lot of wabble-wits stuck away in offices in Washington than by a banker. Henry Morgenthau, for gossakes! Why, old Andy Mellon could have stolen his fillings right out of his face with boxing gloves on without Henry's even knowing it. Henry isn't the one who is shoving the queer. He just runs the building. You know, okays orders for so many mops and so many gross of paper clips and so many tons of spare parts for adding machines to keep track of that deficit. And the tape is a year behind, at that.

I just don't know, neighbor. For a long time when I

Those Were the Days

would hear them say Old Deal in that curl-of-the-lip way I went along, too, feeling that, yes, it certainly was terrible, but let me ask you this: How were you doing back in those terrible days, and if this New Deal is going to be so swell when are those boys going to get through that long windup and let us see what they have got on the ball?

Too Much Territory

ONE LOUD flaw in the reasoning of John L. Lewis as he presents his demands on the national government is his contention that, as spokesman for the Committee for Industrial Organization, he speaks for all Labor in the United States. At least that seems to be his contention when he refers to the President as one who supped at Labor's table and then cursed with equal fervor and fine impartiality both Labor and its adversaries.

True, the President and his party supped at the table of John L. Lewis and the C. I. O., but Lewis and the C. I. O. are not Labor in the all-embracing sense of the word. There is still the American Federation of Labor, with a membership comparable to that of Mr. Lewis' union, and there are still more working people outside both organizations than there are within the two rival groups. Certainly Mr. Lewis isn't speaking for the A. F. of L., which surely is composed of Labor, and neither is he speaking for the great majority who are not organized at all.

Too Much Territory

In fact, Mr. Lewis does not even speak for the entire membership of the C. I. O., because there are many members of that organization who are members under duress and stand to lose their jobs under the closed-shop agreement if they should quit. Some members of the C. I. O. have been bulldozed into membership, and others have been "delivered" by majority vote of unions which were independent or belonged to the A. F. of L. when they joined.

Having been "delivered" by majority vote they must string along as nominal C. I. O. people, even though they are still opposed to Lewis and the C. I. O., and voted against affiliation with his outfit. As mere statistics, such unwilling members cannot be distinguished from the enthusiasts, but in politics they do not belong to Lewis, and he can't declare them against any one.

Though fifty-one willing members may drag in forty-nine unwilling associates and make them pay dues and strike on occasion, nobody can compel their compliance with a political preference of a majority. Lewis cannot deliver them to the President in the event of a deal between them.

Mr. Lewis is correct when he says the President cursed with equal fervor and fine impartiality, but he takes liberties when he says Labor was the party of the first part. The President's curse, as Mr. Lewis calls it, was delivered against a state of affairs in which the C. I. O. undertook to drag unwilling Labor into its ranks and

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

threatened massacre in case troops were not called to close the mills.

It was all right to use troops to keep men off their jobs, but it was a betrayal of Labor to use the same force to protect from massacre men who wanted to work and had not given the C. I. O. authority to represent them.

By the same reasoning that Mr. Lewis employs in his claim on the President's political gratitude he and the C. I. O. might be held to be indebted to the Communists, for he has supped with the Bolos much the same as Mr. Roosevelt supped with Lewis and his group. The Communists find the C. I. O. much to their liking, have given aid and comfort to the organization and have found themselves welcome. At some future time in similar circumstances they will remind him of this and ask him to sing for his supper, even as he asked Roosevelt.

Anyway, Lewis sounds a phony note when he suggests that he and his C. I. O. had any choice but to support Roosevelt in the election. There was nobody else whom they could have supported, and if Lewis himself had tried to jerk his membership over to Alf Landon or Earl Browder he would have busted the rope. He claims gratitude for an act of self-interest and has been trying to compel the President to swing a towel in his corner in his own political fight for the control of all organized Labor. He is also trying to unload the blame and avoid

Too Much Territory

the discredit due the leader who made a spectacular mess and failure of the big strike in little steel.

When Mr. Lewis undertakes to speak for all Labor in the United States he is like those habitual letter writers who say, "All right-thinking people believe"—or, "Every good citizen will vigorously oppose"—He takes in much more territory than he has any authority to represent, and this is not to forget, either, that there are a certain proportion of captives among those for whom he may legally claim the right to speak.

For Ways That Are Dark

THE BEST income tax and loophole experts in the country are the accountants employed by the United States Bureau of Internal Revenue to comb the returns for mistakes and evasions. They are kiver-to-kiver men who know the law and the regulations forward, backward and sidewise, and they can sort out the deliberately snarled relations of a dozen or a hundred phony corporations as unerringly as an old woman by a fireside unwinds a castoff sweater.

These agents know all the government's tricks, snares and loopholes, the existence of which Mr. Roosevelt always forgets to mention, and any big taxpayer who wants the best advice on evading taxes and avoiding Treasury traps can save money by hiring a veteran of the Bureau to come and point out how.

These agents get small pay from the government, but they pick up all the trade and business secrets of business firms by delving into their affairs, and there is nothing to prevent their resigning to sell their information to private employers after a decent pause.

For Ways That Are Dark

Andrew Mellon, when he was the best Secretary of the Treasury since Alexander Hamilton, ordered a survey showing the most effective income tax escapes as revealed by the intimate experience of the government's experts. He received a report listing nine methods and, according to testimony given later, used some of those methods himself.

The government, however, also uses technicalities to trick, harass and, as far as honesty and decency are concerned, to rob the taxpayers. I cite the case of a widow who was compelled to preserve for inspection by a party of ghouls from the Treasury the few old suits, the socks, worn underwear and hats and the rusty golf clubs of her late husband that they might be appraised as part of her late husband's estate. He had not been a dressy man and his clothes, when new, didn't stand him much. But a second-hand dealer wouldn't have paid his own brother \$50 for the whole wardrobe as used garments.

The widow would have given them away, except that this would have been regarded as an attempt to evade appraisal and might have resulted in a punitive, arbitrary estimate in the absence of the clothes. A tax on the wardrobe would not yield more than a few dollars, but the government had a cunning idea. This property, at an arbitrary government appraisal, might raise the total amount of the estate into a higher bracket, and by that trick the wife and child of a dead citizen who had worked hard and saved for their protection might be

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

robbed of an amount greater than the original value of his garments, which they were not allowed to give away.

Speaking of ethics, morality and loopholes, as Mr. Roosevelt often does, I submit that the grave-robbing policy of the government in this instance smells more foul than that of the rich evader who forms a phony company to save money from the clutches of the deserving Democrats.

Mr. Roosevelt speaks feelingly of the unemployed poor as the victims of this withholding, and in the abstract he is correct. But my own feeling on this subject is influenced by the first appointment that Jim Farley made when he became Postmaster General. Mr. Farley's first appointment was that of his own personal coat-holder and court jester to keep his personal souvenir scrapbook.

I recollect, too, that Theodore Bilbo, of Mississippi, was given \$6000 a year to keep a scrapbook in another government department for no other reason than that he was a deserving Democrat and broke.

To be sure, it was generous of Mr. Farley to make a job for his personal entertainer, but it is my thought that his personal generosity should not be carried on at public expense, and 10,000 such acts of kindness scattered through the national administration represent a merciless robbery of the unemployed poor for whom the President speaks so feelingly.

For Ways That Are Dark

Mr. Roosevelt has done nothing to dispel a suspicion that the money comes earmarked for keepers of the scrapbooks in a thousand and one guises and that the unemployed poor get second chop at the dough.

Change of Pace

IF ANY ONE should ask me to select the most courteous, efficient and conscientious class of workers that I have ever met I would gladly name the telegraph operators, with whom I have had much traffic here and there in the last twenty-five years. It is my impression that they are not overpaid to any fantastic extent, but I have seen them working in the rain and sleet, with the water dripping off their hat brims, and I have often kept them overtime far into the night waiting for my documents, and do not recall ever hearing a grumble.

There was a man in New York who used to work Western Union wires at the games and fights—a sick-looking man with sallow, thin features—who collapsed at the ringside in the Yankee Stadium one night. There is always great tension along the working press rows at those big championship fights, and probably my friend shouldn't have been there at all. But he was there, jiggling his bug beside me on the shelf until suddenly, just

Change of Pace

as the main event went into the ring, he passed the word to the head man that he was about to cave in.

So the head man quietly moved another operator into his place and we let him out, and the first I knew of his being ill was when it was all over and I was boxing up my typewriter along toward midnight. I had thought it was just a routine switch, but the relief man told me our friend was an invalid and had passed out in the aisle.

I didn't see him again until one of those miserable Army-Notre Dame days in the fall, when he bobbed up, skinnier than ever, to sit four or five hours, shivering like a homeless dog and rattling his bug with fingers blue from the cold.

At Harvard, Yale and Princeton a decade ago the athletic management liked to kid themselves with the fiction that football was strictly a game in the Big Three. They refused to roof over their press coops up on the rims of the arenas on the ground that this concession to the comfort of the Fourth Estate would suggest that they were currying favor with the press with a view to publicity and gate receipts.

The truth was that they knew they could command the publicity and receipts, anyway. This policy continued until the professional football schools began to outscore the Big Three both in lineage and money. Then they all built roofs and windbreaks and put in electric lights.

Those were terrible days.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

The telegraph operators burned matches to warm their fingers and see the copy, and sometimes they would set fire to newspapers. In Boston, the chief operator used to bring a couple of quarts of bootleg Medford rum, home-made from molasses, which tasted like liquid soap but was very warming.

But after the work was over and you moved into the hot, close atmosphere of the hotel dining room or the train for home the rum would hit you like a falling gargoye and sometimes all would go blank.

I never have understood the marvellous efficiency of the operators and the wire chiefs in maintaining the service in the open air in bad weather, or even indoors in the great halls where the national political conventions are running and hundreds of newspaper men are pounding out thousands of words. You just ask for a wire, and pretty soon there it is beside you and a man to shove the copy through.

Come flood, tornado or earthquake, they still manage somehow to shake together some kind of service, and if you phone some country operator at his home after hours in an emergency he will come down and open up shop and give you paper and a machine and wait around patiently until you have done your stuff.

The honest courtesy and helpfulness of telegraph people are on a level with their ability to get things done under the most difficult conditions. I am not very good

Change of Pace

at singing praises, having very little practice, and I hardly know what has prompted me to this extraordinary outburst of sweetness toward my fellow man.

Just call it a change of pace.

George Spelvin Thinks Further

DRIVING TO THE office this morning, George Spelvin, American, thought as follows:

I guess that'll hold her for awhile. Any time she wants to move out, the door's always there. Or I can move to some quiet little hotel and be perfectly happy, and don't let any one forget it. Come home when I want, order what I want for dinner and no waiter is going to tell me I got to eat vegetables. I'm the guy that's bringing in the dough every week, and don't you forget it, madam. I got some rights around here, too, and any time you don't like it, madam, nobody's going to detain you, I'm sure.

Get back in line, louse. Oh, to be a cop when some bum like that cuts out of line!

And another thing, madam. If it comes to drinking, that bum brother of yours does a fair job of drinking and I notice I always show up at the office on time, anyway, and, drinking or no drinking, who is the one who brings in the dough around here? Me, madam, your husband.

George Spelvin Thinks Further

No, kid; I'm off the stuff for life. No sense to it. A man's an awful fool punishing himself this way—for what? For a few hours' foolishness. Where are those friends going to be when I'm down and out and dying from liver trouble or something, all to be a good-time Charlie with a lot of drop-ins?

She's right, in a way, I got to admit. Must have made an awful clown of myself, and I shouldn't have told that one about the hill-billy and his maw. I suppose, in her way, she means well, but never me to take that kind of bawling out. Man's got to be a man in his own house. They get to think you can't get along without them and you have to slap them down.

Don't understand this wages and hours thing. New England manufacturers favor bill to raise workmen's wages in the South. When did those pirates get so big-hearted about any workmen, South, North or wherever? Rotten, leaky slums all through New England and manufacturers' kids going to luxury schools, paying enough tuition to support two families so some snooty little brat can learn to ape the English. Better get big-hearted about some New England workmen first before taking in more territory.

Still and all, I don't know. If a man can't earn sixteen bucks a week to support a family down South or wherever, he might just as well go out and get it with a gun or give himself back to the Indians. Somebody's got to protect a man from a lot of sweatshop pirates, and I'm

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

for that whether it's the government does it or union, or whatever. Trouble with unions—they either rob him or they jerk him out on strike because a lot of grease-ball Communists want to start a riot. Government seems better; only I don't know. If I had a factory I wouldn't want any bum politician from the government coming around telling me what I got to pay. Some bum politician who never did a lick in his life nosing into my affairs. But sixteen bucks a week——

Madam, how would you like to be married to sixteen bucks a week? Drinking or no drinking, you don't know how well you are off, my friend. You're no Myrna Loy, you know. Maybe you think you are, but I could tell you something if I wasn't too considerate of your feelings, although you aren't so considerate of mine.

Moses! Three minutes to the office and red lights all over the place. Well, I'm stopped and I'm not over the white line, so don't look at me that way, cop. After all, you are a cop, you know, and I'm paying your salary to do your stuff, not to be glaring at law-abiding citizens who pay your salary.

And suppose that we have this sixteen-bucks-a-week law and it does keep cheap labor out of expensive labor States? What of it if it does? We got tariffs between States, anyway. One State charges fifty cents a quart for liquor; another charges a dollar. So you can bring it in from the fifty-cent State to the dollar State. Same about cigarets and gasoline, and it can be the same about

George Spelvin Thinks Further

hundreds of things. So why all the commotion about tariff? You got me, brother.

One minute to the office, and do I feel awful? Ask me—do I feel ousy-lay? I guess she is right, at that, although she could be more pleasant about it when a man feels this way. A man knows without being told. It isn't the principle; it's the way she goes about it. But she's a pretty good old girl. I guess I'll call her up after a while.

Ah, just in time!

Morning, Mr. Nilly.

Dingbats

AMUSING, OF COURSE, was the revelation that much of the personal fortune of Richard Whitney, the former president of the New York Stock Exchange, was invested in economic dingbats rather than conservative blue-chip issues. But some restaurateurs go next door to eat, many saloon keepers are teetotalers and Barbara Hutton wears very little jewelry from the counters of the five-and-ten.

Mr. Whitney's properties included an applejack firm, a dirt mine whose product was calculated to invigorate tired land and a bug juice inimical to insect pests. These be queer interests indeed for a man in his position, and Mr. Whitney may feel embarrassed by the disclosure of his foibles in the inventory of his old golf sticks, collar buttons and initialed belt buckles.

Great men do have their whims, however.

The infallible fire extinguisher which Tex Rickard bought from an inventor was his favorite investment. It consisted of a powder inclosed in a glass grenade of egg shape, and the theory was that hundreds of grenades

Dingbats

tossed through the windows of a burning building would shatter and smother the flames under a sifting of the magic chemicals. Unfortunately, however, in practical tests the glass eggs plopped in the blazing crates which Mr. Rickard had ignited for his demonstration and did not break.

Up to the time of his death, Mr. Rickard was pondering designs similar to the salt shaker and talcum powder sifter. He was sensitive about his patent fire extinguisher and defended it doggedly against the scoffing jests of Mr. Gene Fowler, who was his press agent at the time but lacked the true reverential spirit of the press agent toward his employer.

Mr. Rickard was the associate of many rich and socially refined Wall Street operators, included among his memorable Six Hundred millionaires, and he always insisted that if a poor man rubbed elbows with millionaires long enough he would rub off some of the rich onto himself. Yet he was only a little brother of the rich when he died, and he had had to endure much from Mr. Fowler, not only with regard to his magic powder but also concerning his interest in acoustics.

Somehow, around Madison Square Garden about that time there developed a strange interest in acoustics, and a number of fight managers and boxing writers talked loftily of their investment in a company which manufactured them. Mr. Rickard urged Mr. Fowler to get aboard for the future security of Agnes, his wife, and

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

Jane, their young daughter, who recently fed John Barrymore a drink of sarsaparilla neat, causing him to roar, "My God, I am in the house of the Borgias!"

Mr. Fowler floored him, however, with the remark that acoustics were nothing but echoes and that he doubtless had been swindled by some clever rogue not above imposing on his unlearnedness.

There do be some in this country who jeer at President Roosevelt's economic knowledge, but among New Dealers he is held to possess the sum of all wisdom on such matters. Yet it was not many years ago that Mr. Roosevelt, as a private financier, was promoting a company to trade in German marks, a company to produce a glorified tintype or snapshot gallery for the sidewalk trade and a company which was going to conduct vast retail business entirely by slot machines, thus eliminating incalculable numbers of store clerks.

That was before technological unemployment became a political and economic issue in the country, and it is Mr. Roosevelt's good fortune that the plan did not succeed, thanks be to the larceny that dwells in the human breast. Mr. Roosevelt's customers foiled the plan and saved him from blame for technological unemployment by using home-made money in the slot machines, so the jobs of the clerks were saved.

Henry Morgenthau, an economic genius surely, was a partner of Mr. Roosevelt in those venturesome days, and in view of their interest in dingbats Mr. Whitney's

Dingbats

investments in the applejack company, the dirt mine and the bug juice may be said to have the most eminent precedent.

Indeed, the blue chip often is a bad investment. American Telephone and Telegraph was selling around 180 a year or so ago, a blue chip if ever there was one. It closed at 112 yesterday.

Yah! Guadalajara!

THERE IS GREAT indignation in Rome against Mr. Ernest Hemingway, the fur-bearing author, because of certain remarks which he wrote from Spain about the valor of Mussolini's Invincible Black Shirts.

Mr. Hemingway wrote that the Conquering Legions of the Duce marched on two-way feet, and were faster in reverse than forward. He was referring particularly to their conduct at Guadalajara, where the Duce's Indomitable Hosts executed a spirited advance to the rear and suffered many casualties from trampling.

It appears that combat experience developed in Mussolini's Irresistibles a peculiarity which no other great military captain has had to consider as a hazard of war. In most Invincible Legions the front rank is regarded as the post of maximum peril and honor. But at Guadalajara, when Mussolini's Brave Black Shirts encountered the enemy and started their charge for the rear, the men in the rear rank found themselves overwhelmed by the impetuous dash of their comrades in the forward

Yah! Guadalajara!

positions who were climbing up their backs in their haste and shouting the Black Shirt war cry of "Get out of the way and let a man run that kin run!"

It is reliably reported that most of the Black Shirt casualties were caused by hobnails, and the Italian commander is known to have sent a paper to the high command recommending that hereafter in building military roads it would be an excellent idea to bank the turns, as his men lost much time and many lives slowing up on the curves.

Mr. Hemingway's description of this engagement was written against the background of his own experience in the war to end war, in which he served with the Italians and observed the great Caporetto Run. He thought the Black Shirts were even faster in retreat than the weary and half-hearted soldiers of the Royal Army of those days, and predicted that, with a little more experience in battle, Mussolini's Invincible Black Shirts could easily establish records both in the sprints and over a distance of ground that would stand for all time.

The Fascist journalists of Rome detected a derogatory note in Mr. Hemingway's tribute to the Black Shirts' footwork, however, and some of them have proposed that he throw away his pen, or typewriter, and meet the Black Shirts personally on the field of honor.

They obviously must know, however, that Mr. Hemingway is now up in his forties, that he weighs about two

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

hundred pounds and that he has not been keeping in athletic trim.

It was one thing for Mr. Hemingway to win a newspaper decision over Mr. Max Eastman in a closed room in a dispute over the allegation that he wore false eyelashes on his chest. But any fair sportsman would be bound to admit that Mr. Hemingway, at his age and weight, would have no chance of catching the Duce's Invincible Legions, who are all young and trained to get off their marks fast and run all day, always urged to greater haste by the hot breath of their comrades on their necks.

If the Roman journalists had proposed a meeting between Mr. Hemingway and the Black Shirts in some bull-ring or stockade, that would have been different and Mr. Hemingway probably would have accepted with alacrity. But in open country, and especially on a downhill terrain, the contest would be so one-sided as to add no luster to the burnished eagles on the standards of the Duce's valiant hordes. The Duce's heroes would lose Mr. Hemingway in a mile.

Mr. Hemingway wrote another thought which also seems to have been misconstrued by the Roman journalists as a dirty dig at the Fearless Legions. He said that whenever a fearless Black Shirt falls down and suffers hobnail bruises while advancing to the rear the sight of blood arouses the tenderest filial feelings in the conquering hero and sets him to crying, "Mamma mia!

Yah! Guadalajara!

Mamma mia!" in the night. He thought this rather sweet in an Invincible Legion and suggested, in a respectful way, that Mussolini ought to send their mammas with them when they go out to execute his inflexible will.

At the risk of the same displeasure that Mr. Hemingway now suffers one is tempted to propose a new war song for the Invincible Legions. Song-writing is a specialized art, but, roughly, the theme would be: "Oh, mamma! Oh, mamma! That Spaniard's here again."

The Manly Arts

OF ALL THE occupations that lure young men I can think of none offhand which takes more and gives less than prize fighting and wrestling. Most fighters and wrestlers do not make as much as a fair living in their active years—a fact which is obscured by talk and publicity regarding big gate receipts at the few important productions.

They live in cheap hotels or rooming houses when they are on the road, they suffer great pain from broken bones and other injuries, and many of the fighters become feeble-minded from blows on the head which injure their brains. The great majority of them wind up broke and unfit for common working jobs, and have nothing to show for their careers but a few old and brittle newspaper clippings and their scars.

Blindness is an occupational disease of both fighters and wrestlers, and even those stars who collect fortunes usually lose them one way or another—although that, of course, cannot be held against the professions themselves. These fortunes are exaggerated, however, for people

The Manly Arts

think of them in large, round numbers and forget that a champion or near-champion pays a manager from one-third to one-half of his earnings and is subject to the Federal, and, in some cases, State income taxes.

He also is expected to give away money in proportion to his reputed earnings, and in recent years has been dragged into politics and litigation which absorb his income. The income taxes cut deep, because the gladiator makes all his money in a few years, and the law allows no spread for those after years when he has lost his earning power.

His whole career is compressed into a brief time, usually in his early twenties, whereas a man in some other line of work makes a gradual rise and thus pays less income tax on an equal amount of earnings.

I recently saw a reference to a little ex-fighter named Joe Demelfi, once known as the Young Zulu Kid, a nice little Italian from Brooklyn, who fought Jimmy Wilde for the flyweight championship of the world during the World War. Wilde knocked out the Zulu Kid in eleven rounds, and the Zulu nearly choked on his tongue until a medical officer of the British Army hopped out of the audience and, with some expert hitch, dragged it out like a Garibaldi necktie.

The Zulu and his manager, Joe Sarno, got \$2500, and that was the best purse they ever received, although the Kid was always fighting and was almost a champion. He fought for eating money for himself and Sarno, and,

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

barring his two-thirds of the \$2500 purse, never had much more than enough for his current expenses in third-class hotels. The Zulu is now a bootblack.

In the fall of 1936 when Jack Dempsey was out with Jack Curley and a troupe of heavyweight wrestlers campaigning New York State for Franklin D. Roosevelt a graduate of Fordham University wrestled thirty minutes for \$20, and the pay of the athletes ranged between \$15 and \$25, plus railroad fare, a few mediocre meals and a room for one night. Some of the wrestlers were well known, all were fairly skillful, and the work, though decidedly frivolous, was hard and painful.

The customers think that because the wrestlers nowadays go in for clowning they suffer no pain. But there is no man who can be hoisted aloft and slammed to the floor half a dozen times or dive through the ropes into a tangle of chairs on a concrete floor without some wear and tear. The wrestlers are always bruised and scuffed, and their wounds often become infected, in addition to which they all fear and many catch a disease of the eyes which is supposed to come from dirty wrestling mats.

The career of the average fighter or wrestler is a succession of gummy hotel rooms, poverty, dirty dressing rooms in dirty fight arenas, hard, painful competition, injuries and victimization at the hands of all manner of cheap and brutal swindlers who have a hundred schemes for stealing money which he has earned with the sweat of his brow and the blood of his veins.

The Manly Arts

He sees his name in the papers occasionally and enjoys a little prestige, but he can't eat old clippings, and when his hands or his eyes fail or he finds himself lurching in his stride and mumbling in his speech from the effects of the head-punching he is worse off than he would have been if he had avoided the ring in the first place to take a job as wagon-helper.

Include Me Out

A GREAT MANY of us who, at the outbreak of the Spanish war, thought of the struggle as one between democracy and Fascism have since been compelled to revise our views and admit that whatever the outcome democracy cannot win. The loyalist side is Communistic and anarchistic, and the Moscow interest has been strongly represented in the military and political operations of the defenders.

Bill Carney, of *The New York Times*, was viciously denounced by the Communists and undercover Communists in this country after he left Madrid for Paris and revealed the fact that the Soviet Ambassador was head man on the loyalist side.

But other information confirmed his report, and there are many believers in democracy who are not only sorry but resentful for having been led to waste honest democratic indignation on behalf of a masquerader. They no longer have even a rooting interest. Their horse was scratched.

In this situation there is, nevertheless, a lively compe-

Include Me Out

tition to enlist the sympathy of Americans, as though there could be a choice between one culture and the other of the same foul disease. The pro-government propagandists, Communists, as well as those mulish democrats who are too stubborn to admit that they have been mistaken, insist that, even if the government is receiving help from Russia and from Communists elsewhere, the government cause is preferable to that of the rebels, because Hitler and Mussolini are on the rebel side.

The propagandists of the opposition still harp on the fact that the loyalist side is an enemy of Christianity, particularly Catholicism, which seems to be true in the formal sense, although it is impossible to believe that religion could be utterly exterminated in the Spaniards, even if the Communists and anarchists should finally win. But this is puzzling, because how comes Hitler to be fighting on the side of Christianity and Catholicism in Spain, while his spies and sluggers make war on them in Germany?

The exasperating truth is that there are Christians and Catholics on the government side and enemies of Christianity and Catholicism on the rebel side, altogether apart from the Mohammedan Moors, who accompanied General Franco in his early campaign.

But democracy is nowhere in the situation. Democracy is not even in the middle, and any one who believes in democracy only, with no choice between the two savage but identical extremes, can offer no encouragement to

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

either. As to organized religion, it is clear that Franco has the mission, but in view of the writings which have been published on the rebel side of the case it is impossible to throw in with the revolt.

Father Wilfrid Parsons, the noted Jesuit journalist, wrote that the great tragedy of Spain was that in the nineteenth century the working masses of Spain apostatized from the Church.

"And it is well to remember," Father Parsons wrote, "it was poverty, destitution and injustice which made them apostatize. They got to hate the Church, because they hated the friends of the Church who exploited them and whom the Church did nothing to rebuke or correct. The words of Pope Leo XIII forty-five years ago went unheeded, and his great encyclical, 'Rerum Novarum,' was neglected. Now the Church is reaping the sad fruits of that neglect in the loss of so many souls and in the destruction of its churches."

More recently Miss Aileen O'Brien wrote in the Jesuit publication *America* that it was treason of a certain Duchess to dance a tango solo in a night club in Madrid, because this act of informality, like heresy, undermined the state. A Spaniard of the Franco side had said that he would have shot the Duchess for this, and Miss O'Brien wrote, "The words were perfectly clear to me; moreover, I fully agreed with them."

Developing her contention that it was treason of the Duchess, punishable by death (commandment notwith-

Include Me Out

standing), to dance the tango solo in a Madrid night club, Miss O'Brien explained:—"The Spaniard is democratic in that a peasant, speaking to a Marquis, may address him as 'Thou.' "

This measure of democracy will seem a little scant, I am afraid, to most Americans, but Miss O'Brien proceeded to say that the peasant obeys the Marquis, and the Marquis the King, because they have received from God their right to be obeyed.

"But," says Miss O'Brien, "if he obeys the King and is not free to do otherwise, neither is the King not free to command. The King must command and the peasant must obey, because such is the will of God."

So that is God's will, is it?

Of such is the demand on the piety of American believers in democracy to put in with Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, castor oil, suppression, oppression, the infant soldiers of the dictators, persecution, paganism, militarism, massacre and everything that democracy detests and fears.

As between all this and complete ungodliness, what can an American possibly choose?

Accolade

EXCEPT IN THE matter of beauty, which is debatable anyway, the American automobile of the present day is a marvel. So I propose that recognition be given to the people whose optimism and patience in suffering and disappointment made possible this achievement. That would not be the inventors, the factory talent, the designers or engineers, nor yet the money operators in the Street who promoted the manufacturing companies.

It wouldn't be Ford, Hudson, Knudsen, Nash, Graham or Louis Chevrolet, and it wouldn't be Durant or any duPont, either. It would be Mr. and Mrs. George Spelvin, the average Americans, and the great, reliable suckers who saved a little money and bought a family car and later on another, notwithstanding mechanical and moral failures of the industry which threw on them the financial burden of the experiments leading to perfection.

Starting with their first jalopy about twenty-five years ago, Mr. and Mrs. Spelvin have ridden in some

Accolade

terrible junks at great expense, but they are reaping their reward now, either in heaven or in the current models which slide along like the shadow of a bird on slick water, and with scarcely ever a moment's misbehavior under the hood.

These cars are the best dollar's worth that money ever could buy, and that is only fair, because there have been times when a happy family party on a Sunday outing on suburban roads could figure on five dollars' worth of horn trouble alone.

Not only were the cars no good in those days but the dealer's and manufacturer's guarantee was even worse—a foul and cynical snare which promised to make good defects in material and workmanship, and never, to my considerable personal knowledge of such failures, replaced so much as a two-bit bolt or a dime-a-dozen washer.

If the engine fell out in the middle of the road, that was no fault of the engine itself or the genius who forgot to wire it down, but an act of God, the devil or a bad driver.

Wheels came off and rolled gaily away through daisy fields or delicatessen windows, the lamps wouldn't light, the brakes wouldn't hold, the gears wouldn't shift, the engines wouldn't run, and ever and anon Mr. Spelvin, tooling along with the kiddies and the little woman in his costly can, would feel an ominous vibration in his highly sensitized toes and know that sixty dollars' worth

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

of rear-end gears had failed to mesh and were grinding themselves to shrapnel in the housing.

He then paid ten dollars to be towed to the lair of a roadside brigand who charged him \$80 more to repair the damage, and, like as not, a dollar a day to store the barouche until he could borrow the money from the loan shark to bail it out.

They made their brake rods of wire cable which stretched like rubber garters—a noble experiment, to be sure, though expensive to Mr. Spelvin. They misjudged the heat of the exhaust lines, with the result that Mr. Spelvin often paid specialists' rates to solemn consultants at the roadside clinics, who put in new gadgets but warned him frankly, and with truth, that this model was just another turkey in the long and painful process of improving the breed of the motor car.

His tires blew out or just sighed quietly and died, and sometimes his steering wheel or his gear-shift lever came off in his hands as he pointed out the beauties of the hot-dog and souvenir stands along the lovely open road.

Twenty years ago Mr. Spelvin paid for a four-cylinder bone-shaker more than he pays today for an eight-cylinder car that rarely seems to take a deep breath, even in heavy traffic or going up the hills. He paid extra for the little ten-cent mirror that gave him a third eye for cops behind, extra for the spare tire, tube and rim, extra for the frames to hold his license plates

Accolade

and extra for the nickeled Kewpie, Brownie or other æsthetic horror on the radiator cap.

For a long time he paid extra for the lighting equipment and the self-starter, and I am not sure but that the manufacturer's label was a little something extra, too.

Honor, of course, to the horny-handed, square-cap heroes of labor who put these traps together, honor to the inventor, the financier and the man who drew the pretty pictures for the ads. But honor first, and in greatest measure, to Mr. and Mrs. George Spelvin, the game, indomitable guinea pigs of the automotive industry whose woes, optimism and humble earnings are built into the car that rolls along serene, comfortable and almost infallible today.

The Captain Who Blighted My Life

CAPTAIN JOE PATTERSON, the owner of *The New York Daily News*, is always ribbing the publishers of the small-town papers about their employment of little boys, or urchins, as newsboys and route carriers because he regards this as child labor which he is against. It is always nice to see a penitent sinner whooping Hallelujah! on the mourners' bench, but what I want to know is, what about me?

Because a long time ago, when I was an urchin in Chicago, my youth got blighted amid the sordid influences of the city streets in the service of *The Chicago Tribune*, from which Captain Patterson derived his original fortune. I got blighted both ways, peddling and delivering, Captain Patterson's parent paper, but in justice to him I have to say that he exploited my childhood only half as much as Mr. Hearst.

He exploited me only in the A.M.s., but Mr. Hearst sapped my vitality, stunted my growth and clouded my

The Captain Who Blighted My Life

young dreams both morning and evening. Old Victor Lawson, who then owned *The Chicago Daily News*; Old Hutch, the owner of the long defunct *Chicago Evening Journal*, and the proprietors of *The Inter-Ocean and Record-Herald* blighted me, too, and before that, up in a place called Excelsior, Minn., I took a pretty good blighting from three Minneapolis publishers, only one of whom I can remember by name.

His name was Murphy, and the paper now belongs to his son—a big, fat, black-haired man. I saw him in a night club one night down in Palm Beach drinking champagne, and I felt like telling him every bubble was a shattered ideal of mine, every drop a blood sacrifice of an innocent child. But when I figured that maybe some day our syndicate might want to sell him my stuff, on which I get a percentage, I kept my mouth shut.

I know that was sordid commercialism and unworthy of the tradition of journalistic independence, but we didn't raise any feeble-minded children in our family, and, anyway, I have just been telling you I got blighted, so I can't tell the difference between right and wrong.

Between times I got blighted as a pin boy in a bowling alley and as bottle-washer in a drugstore where I learned to stretch whiskey with tap water.

I agree with Captain Patterson that child labor in the circulation branch of the newspaper business is very bad for the morals of the little merchants, or

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

urchins, because my father was a famous evangelist who didn't drink, smoke, chew or use profane language, and yet I was pretty good at all these activities before I was twelve years old. I also learned to shoot craps, but I was too dumb to remember the odds against ten the hard way and all those other combinations, so I gave that up.

In the mornings, though, I used to swear quite a lot, especially when people would leave frozen stiff washing on the line on their back porches which would interfere with accurate throwing of the papers, which were rolled up and tied with string. After two or three trials, with the paper tumbling back down, I would cut loose with a blast of language and haul *The Chicago Tribune* all the way up to the third floor by hand, kicking and stomping on the stairs to wake people up by way of revenge.

Maybe that was wrong, but what do you expect of an urchin and why didn't they take in their clothes at night?

Captain Patterson cites the testimony of Warden Lawes that 69 per cent of the scholars at Sing Sing were newsboys, and I won't argue with statistics, but I can say that the only two urchins in our neighborhood who went to prison were too smart to be little merchants. They didn't care for some of that four o'clock in the morning stuff, and they couldn't be bothered hopping street cars in the evening selling

The Captain Who Blighted My Life

sheets for a profit of one-third of a cent when they could cut the lead plumbing or copper wire out of an old building and get two dollars from the junkman.

Did I ever tell you how I came to quit getting blighted?

Well, it was a Sunday, with a blizzard on the North Shore lake front, and I was shoving my little wagon of Sunday *Tribunes* through the snow when all of a sudden the wind blew away about twenty *Tribunes*. And while I was chasing the pieces it blew my route book into the lake.

That made me thoroughly disgusted, so I just went home, leaving wagon, route book, papers and all, and when the route boss called up to tell me I was fined \$3 I said, "Oh, shut your face!"

Hangover

HANGOVER IS a malady in two phases, cerebral and gastric, but the gastric phase is only secondary and in some cases does not occur at all. Cerebral hangover, which is known also as the jitters and the shrieking meemies, comes from the absorption of alcohol into the tissues of the brain. This does something to the centers governing the emotions, and the attack continues until the alcohol has vanished.

There is no medicine or treatment to cure or mitigate hangover, although science has made faithful efforts to discover such a boon, and many fiends in human form have marketed various kinds of fizzing salts and waters for which false claims of miraculous powers have been made. It is a terrible thing indeed, thus to impose on the hopes of suffering victims, but they do it, nevertheless, and there you have another instance of man's inhumanity to man. Some people think a raw egg in a cup of Worcestershire sauce gives relief, but they are just crazy, because the net result is a cold, clammy moisture on the forehead. Others have a

Hangover

wan faith in canned tomatoes, but they don't do any good, either. Finally, there is the hair of the dog that bit you, but that only deadens the pain and postpones the suffering, because eventually that alcohol, too, must be eliminated from the brain.

The only cure for hangover is suffering, and this may be mild or awful, brief or prolonged, according to the amount of alcohol absorbed. For some curious reason which science has not discovered, certain beverages and combinations of them produce distinctive types of hangover. Beer, for example, causes a dull, tenacious misery, but beer and champagne, combined, result in sharp, uncontrollable twitches and a sense of detachment from one's body. The skin feels loose like a union suit. Champagne in excess gives the subject a feeling that his scalp is flopping around like an old cap several sizes too big, and the brandy victim sometimes has an alarming sense that he has died and mustn't move the body until the coroner has been there. He doesn't actually think that, because his intelligence remains acute, but he feels that way just the same. It is kind of hard to explain.

All types of hangover are accompanied by a numbness of the fingertips and toes and by remorse and a firm determination never to drink alcoholic beverages again. These manifestations abate gradually as the alcohol itself disappears from the brain tissue, and upon complete recovery the subject forgets not only his suffer-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

ings but his excellent resolutions and readily succumbs to temptation.

There is also a tendency to exaggerate the importance of unbecoming remarks and conduct of the night before and to compose mentally, as one lies abed the next morning, letters and speeches of apology to one's hostess for foolish utterances and pranks which were not so bad as all that but merely consistent with the occasion. All who were present the night before feel the same way, and the best procedure is just to forget it.

However, it will be seen that the state of being hung over, painful though it be, is accompanied by a brisk moral and intellectual stimulus. The character is momentarily burnt clean of sinful and frivolous traits, and the mind perceives the wanton folly of excess more clearly than at any other time. If these elements of the malady could be preserved after the period of suffering has passed, the patient would be much better off, but a few days or weeks pass, and, lo! it is the same old story. (I think that is the first time I ever used the word "lo!" and I have never used "alas!") The worst place to have a hangover is in a jail, where there is no human sympathy and there is likely to be a clamorous moaning and babbling of other victims in a really bad way. They can't get any coffee, they can't get sleep, they can't shave, and if it is Saturday night when they are picked up they have to lie in the can until Monday morning.

Hangover

But next to a jail the worst place for a hangover is on a train, and persons about to go away should try to remember how terrible it is to wake up in a stuffy berth about 4 o'clock in the morning and peer out the window at the freight house in High Point, N. C., or Cairo, Ill. It is a long way to the water cooler in the end of the car, and you can't bring back a drink and set it on the window-sill in those little paper envelopes, because they don't have any bottom to sit on. Ten minutes later you have to go and get another, and that means putting on your bathrobe and slippers, and pretty soon they hitch on the diner and the fumes of pork sausage, eggs, bacon and German fried potatoes begin to seep through.

I don't know why I am telling you all this.

Spelvin's Income Tax

THE INCOME tax reviewer called on George Spelvin, American, today, to go over his return for 1936, examine his private papers and ask some questions about his dreams and his personal life, and met a strange rebuff.

"Nothing doing," Mr. Spelvin said. "Absolutely nothing doing."

"Now, don't be like that," the reviewer said. "It's the law, and you will only make trouble for yourself."

"Absolutely nothing doing," Mr. Spelvin insisted. "I am sore."

"What are you sore about?" the reviewer asked.

"I'm sore about this 'Where did you get that \$5?' and 'What did you do with that four-bits?' when Jimmy Roosevelt and the boss himself and Henry Morgenthau get special treatment."

"But they have to pay income tax," the reviewer said.

"Yes, and so do I," said Mr. Spelvin, "and I have paid it, but now you want to take up my time asking a lot of questions that are none of your business, and how do I

Spelvin's Income Tax

know you aren't going to go out and get tight some night and spill a lot of gossip about me? And, moreover, I don't like the way they acted down in Washington when they were combing a lot of other people but refused to go into Jimmy's return or the President's or Henry's. That Republican Congressman said he had trustworthy reports that Jimmy made a big income selling insurance to people who wanted to stay in right with the administration, but when he wanted to put an expert to work on Jimmy's returns, the way you want to pry into mine, the committee said, 'Nothing doing.' Well, all right, nothing doing on his or the President's or Henry's, nothing doing on mine. I'm like Popeye. I'll do anything they do."

"But, for gossakes," the reviewer said, "Henry Morgenthau is my boss. Can you picture me going in and acting like that with the Secretary of the Treasury?"

"Henry ain't my boss," said Mr. Spelvin. "I only know the committee refused to let an expert like you go over Henry's returns, the same as the experts went over other people's, after Ham Fish challenged him. It's one thing to throw down a lot of papers like an inventory of the Pennsylvania Railroad and say, 'There it is. Help yourself, chum,' but it's something else to turn loose an expert to see what the figures mean. Henry said people had established losses by exchanging stocks, and he said this was unethical. And the record says Ham Fish charged before the committee that Henry did it

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

himself before the law was changed. Well, did he or didn't he? Why not let an expert decide? What is the reason for all this bashfulness? Brother, I'm bashful myself."

"But surely you don't think there's anything funny about the President's returns," the reviewer said.

"Well, what makes you guys always think mine are so funny, then?" Mr. Spelvin demanded. "You seem to get a lot of laughs out of me. Well, I've got the same kind of a sense of humor, and I want a couple of laughs. You can't ever tell where you are going to turn up a laugh."

"What have you got against Jimmy, anyway?" the agent asked.

"Nothing," said Mr. Spelvin. "I don't even know the guy. But I'll ask you one:—What have you mugs got against me and a lot of other suckers? Always nosing around like a house dick, asking trick questions, pulling trick clauses on guys. Listen, brother. I haven't got any family connections or political connections, and any time I sell a bill of goods it's Spelvin working. I don't even belong to the Elks. I don't like that way of doing. You tell them for me it's unethical."

"Well, I am going to have to turn you in," said the agent.

"Go ahead," Mr. Spelvin said. "I am just practicing Mr. Roosevelt's preaching, and they can't hang you for that. I am hell on unethical conduct and special privilege."

Doubledome Babbitts

DON'T TAKE my word for it, but do a little reading and listening over there on the left and tell me whether you notice the same thing that I have been noticing. It is my observation that they have developed a Babbitt type of their own whose mental habits and jargon are as imitative and whose morals are as wabbly as those of the poor, despised Rotarian of Sinclair Lewis' book who used the verb "to contact" and believed in God and the purity of womanhood but could arch his neck at the hat check girl in a speakeasy on his trips to the salesmen's conventions.

Doubledome Babbitts you might call them, who prattle such words as "allergic," "ideology," "schizophrenic" and the verb "to implement," and brag of their intellectual integrity though it compels them to indorse things which they hate. The verb "to implement" is very stylish in intellectual circles at the moment, and I am only now beginning to be able to encounter it without blinking. For quite some time it instinctively pictured a farm implement such as a corn sheller or manure spreader. Do you know what it means? It just means

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

to do something. To implement a plan is to do it. That is all.

Many words in the jargon of the Doubledome Babbitt came from the hokum of the Viennese head-feelers and their pupils who took a quick course in questions and answers and settled in the high-strung centers of the world to charge high prices for explaining to two-timing and three-timing husbands and wives why they were uneasy in their minds. Most of their consultations had to do with Topic A, and a great big, wonderful brain with a Message for the world, instead of saying "You're telling me!" would pay some sallow mental muckraker \$200 for informing him that it was just the small, still voice that was needling him in his dreams. Usually, by way of lagniappe, the head-feeler would throw in some dirty stories about the curious rites of the cannibals and some trade words with which to astonish the group or set at the next conversational evening. Such words as "fixation," "complex," "defense mechanism" and "masochist" were obtained from the head-feelers.

Now, intellectual integrity is the fad of the moment in doubledome circles—but definitely, as the saying is.

If you have intellectual integrity you take some "ism" such as Communism or New Dealism or Labor Organization and swallow it hair, horns, hoofs and all. If you don't you are a Fascist or a company man boring from within. Why they, of all people, should object either to dictatorship or to boring from within they do not make

Doubledome Babbitts

apparent, considering that all their own isms, taken whole, call for regimentation and the bulldozing of minorities and that it is the fixed policy of the Doubledomes to join various pinkish movements and obtain control by the process which, in the language of the police, would be called an inside job.

To believe in labor organization you must deny the existence of racketeering in unions and justify all strikes, even though they be contrived by dictatorial unionneers for their own motives with the purpose of destroying industry and, incidentally, the workmen's jobs. If you believe in the New Deal you must not gag at any personality or proposal bearing the New Deal stamp, however stealthy or brazenly dishonest the person or poisonous the measure, and you must decry as smearing any legitimate exception to the methods of any one connected with the New Deal. The smearing of Herbert Hoover occurred before intellectual integrity set in and therefore is not a subject for appeal.

In this respect the similarity of the Doubledome to the standard American Babbitt is plain enough to embarrass both. Mr. Babbitt revered womankind, but, as I recall, believed in the double standard, and the Doubledome believes that a man has a property right in his job, but would confiscate that property if the man doesn't join the Doubledome's favorite union.

You read Doubledome's little magazines and listen to him with this in mind and see if you notice what I notice.

Glamorous Hollywood

GRANTED THAT there are thousands of has-beens, never-wasers, mediocrities and downright failures in the so-called colony of the cinema in Hollywood, it is a strange fact that that community of artists contains few, if any, gay and regardless individuals. The poor are wretched because they are, by comparison, poor and yearning, envious, jealous and ungenerous. The rich are self-conscious, jealous, worried and the prey of blackmailers, parasites, tax collectors and fears.

Of course, this is a general observation, and I will grant that there must be a few individual exceptions. On the whole, however, Hollywood differs shockingly from Paris, Vienna and Greenwich Village as of old. Hollywood is hard, harsh, treacherous and avaricious and suffers from a lack of that bread-and-a-bottle comradeship, that great-hearted artistic warmth which melted the distinctions between rich and poor, between the masters and the unarrived in the Bohemias of which we have read so much.

Glamorous Hollywood

The successful actor or writer reckons his standing by his salary and runs with people whose earnings are in his own brackets. But the actor knows that his career is short and is constantly fighting with his employers for more money, for better rôles, for advantages too technical to be explained in a short piece. He may and often does hate the company for which he works and fights bitterly with the executives who employ him but detest him and constantly try to destroy him.

The writer's job at \$1000 or \$2000 or more per week expires every now and again, and he has an agent to hustle up further short-term assignments. He becomes secretive, defensive and bitter. He fights with his wife and is divorced, and we in the rest of the country read of a settlement which reckons his pay at some stupefying figure and her alimony in proportionate amount.

Old friends of the \$35-a-week days in the newspaper business picture him drinking wine on the brink of his swimming pool and decide that he has fallen for some cutie. Maybe so, but more likely he has just become unbearable, and she, too, under the strain of the competition.

They hate to fail. They fear failure, and a reduction in price may be resisted for many weeks at nothing per week. Of course, a man gets drunk in such circumstances. My God, he owes last year's income taxes, and what can he do if he washes out entirely? Go back to night police or the rewrite battery at a newspaper salary? He can't

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

tolerate even himself, whom he admires preposterously.

The dirty little parasites who chisel and blackmail swarm like midges on a June night in the woods. One must spend money at so-and-so's night club or donate one's services to some commentator's program or send Christmas and birthday presents to some contemptible grafter with a column of type or take the risk of a bad report. So they think, anyway. As a matter of truth, the blackmailers, all of them well known to the profession, realize that their threat is largely imaginary.

Comparatively few people hear their radio remarks or read their malicious digs in print, and it is not actually necessary to squander money at their dives, to donate professional services to shows for which they grab the pay or to send them presents at Christmas or on their constantly recurring birthdays. But as long as the poor ham or hack thinks it is necessary the graft is good.

But the Hollywood people are afraid. Greedy and without confidence in their ability, they pay, one way and another, and look on aspirants with suspicion and run with their own financial set lest it be thought that they are losing caste.

The harshness, the wolfish individual suspicion and loneliness of the colony are apparent at once and hard to understand at first. Old friends from back yonder are met at arm's length after years for fear of rivalry. Only a few great souls with great earnings have the bigness and courage to be kind to a newcomer who may

Glamorous Hollywood

want no help. Successful men and women fear, hate and suspect one another.

Play? Yes. Some nights, between pictures maybe. But not with the fellow in the next booth who is out of a job or a Johnny-come-lately fighting his way up. He may be a genius, a great actor, director, dramatist or designer, but don't encourage him. Tell him nothing, mislead him if possible, for he may be after your contract.

Art? Comradeship? A bottle of wine and a hunk of cheese with an unknown?

Where do you think you are? On the Left Bank?

Good Pitch; No Catch

RECENTLY YOUR correspondent composed two little essays kidding the rompers off Benito Mussolini, his Inflexible Will and his Invincible Black Shirt Legions. For all these years Mussolini had been popping his eyes, shoving out that property chin of his, waving his fancy dress bread knife, such as suburban husbands wear at their belts at the annual costume party of the Junior League, and telling the world what he was going to do to Philadelphia Jack O'Brien.

Now, everybody in Italy knows that the Black Shirts are only militia and that, far from being invincible, they are not so hot. The Italian army has contempt for them, and the Duce himself has a realistic, private estimate of their worth.

There came a time in Spain when the Invincible Black Shirts got into a clumsy mixup and, due to no fault of the rank and file, but to a mistake of their commander, were chased by the Spanish rabble of which Mussolini had spoken so contemptuously. This might happen to any green army and be forgotten, but Mussolini had

Good Pitch; No Catch

sounded off so loud and long about his Inflexible Will and his Invincible Legions that he had put his Inflexible Will and his Black Shirts on a spot.

That "Inflexible Will" stuff is too tempting to be resisted when the will does flex. The same goes for that "invincibility" stuff. No man's will is inflexible against the world, and any outfit which claims to be invincible had better be if it doesn't want to be kidded when it isn't.

Your correspondent is still combing bricks, mortar and fragments of shattered bottle glass out of his scalp. The Fascists went nuts. Some of the letters would stifle a wet billy goat, and all of them were full of annoyance, although both compositions were only the faintest imitations of the kind of stuff that Mussolini, in his pep talks, and his journalistic yes-men, in print, have been heaving at the world in general for years.

The Americans have long had a reputation among the Europeans for boastfulness—and this is not to say it wasn't earned, although the American boasting had to do mostly with the height of our buildings, the extent of the country, the richness and wastefulness of the American people and the cost, in millions, of our libraries, jails, State universities, City Halls and sewage plants.

The Americans had dough; they regarded European money, which is reckoned in small units, as funny money and would toss tips to the Mayors of European towns and commanders of European warships whose uniforms

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

were pardonably confused with the lion tamers' costumes worn by carriage starters at European hotels.

They undoubtedly were offensive, but their boasting didn't run much to military matters, for most of them didn't know a squad from a group of armies. Moreover, they had a low opinion of European aristocracy, honestly derived from the notorious conduct of the high-born he-trollops of the Old World who came over here to marry rich and silly little American females for their money.

American principles have corroded somewhat since then, but in those days Americans had a feeling that a man with no money who married a rich girl and moved into her set sacrificed his manhood.

But never did the Americans blab about their Inflexible Will or their Invincible Legions as Mussolini and, more lately, Hitler have done.

Mussolini and his press finally reached a point where they apparently convinced themselves that the lack of response in kind was due to awe of his will and his legions.

Nothing said or printed here even approaches the viciousness of the internal propaganda in Italy against other peoples including this one, or the threats which have been sounding through Italy against various nations in turn and in groups including ours.

A bulldozer can't take kidding, however. Even mild kidding which touches him on his vanity drives him

Good Pitch; No Catch

crazy, and the easiest way to get a Fascist's goat is to needle him a slight jab on the subject of the Inflexible Will and the Invincible Black Shirts and then say "Guadalajara."

Old Siwash, New Chicago

THIS IS Founder's Week at Knox College, fondly known as Old Siwash and as the typical American fresh-water school. That may mean nothing to you, but it is hot stuff at Siwash, and they usually import a couple of speakers to sound off at the big dinner which is the climax of the celebration.

This time they brought in Mr. Emanuel Hertz, of New York, who has authored another book on the apparently inexhaustible subject of Abraham Lincoln. They cannot claim Lincoln as an alumnus, because he never had much book-learning—a trait in common which has made many a professional ignoramus in public life swell with homely pride—but they do claim a sort of lien on him because he once debated with Stephen A. Douglas on the slavery question from a scaffold opening off one of the ground-floor windows of the building known as Old Main.

That was the first time that Lincoln defined slavery as a moral issue, but his address is as well remembered for the fact that when Douglas referred to Lincoln as a

Old Siwash, New Chicago

man who had once sold whisky the rail-splitter retorted that Douglas, who was something of a rum-pot, had been his best customer. That slew them.

They have a roomful of furniture and other articles which Mr. Lincoln is said to have owned or touched or looked at, and although there are few persons now living who can claim to have shaken his hand—and most of them probably are unconscionable old liars—there are others who take solemn pride in claiming to have shaken a hand that shook the hand of the great emancipator. Old Siwash alumni have a way of lowering their voices when they speak of Lincoln.

A shoe which could be credibly or even wishfully certified as having been worn by him would be carefully shellacked or gilded and placed on the mantel shelf in the museum, and even a pluck of lint off his coat would be placed under glass for the edification of the students.

It may be said, however, that the students have a fairly stout edification resistance in this particular. Your correspondent, not knowing, casually asked two little co-eds how came Lincoln and Douglas to be debating before the voters that way in a day when the election of Senators was a prerogative of the statesmen of the Legislature, including the usual proportion of petty larceny grafters who would sell a railroad franchise for a second-hand shotgun.

They just couldn't say as to that. Neither could an alumnus who pretends to some authority on a subject

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

known by the god-awful laundry-bag name of Lincolniana.

The contrast between Old Siwash, with her conventional, fresh-water ideas and collegiate customs and her old buildings to which tradition clings in lieu of ivy, and the University of Chicago, only two hours but many years away, one way or another, is inescapable but must be resisted. It required a whole series of pieces in *The Saturday Evening Post* and one of those continued-among-the-leather-belting-ads analyses in *Fortune* to tell what Robert Hutchins is up to at Chicago.

Whatever it is, he seems to have a big thing there, but the sort of parents who send their young to Siwash or Slippery Rock or Spearfish Normal would regard all that as goings-on. No good can come of picking at the young ones' souls, and experience has proved to generations of Siwash graduates that the way of life is to learn lessons out of books, marry, have children, work, succeed, if possible (and with none of your funny definitions of success), then pass away.

"Pass away" is the term that is generally used.

Mr. Hutchins is plagued by a reputation for precocity. He is thirty-eight years old now, but he has been president of Chicago for ten years. And, like Willie Hoppe in billiards and Bobby Jones in golf, continues to be thought of as a boy wonder long after his first long pants. He has the stylish grace and poise of a thoroughbred and much resembles in appearance, manner and

Old Siwash, New Chicago

speech the only stage actor of recent years who has been able to swoon the dolls of whatever age—Mr. Alfred Lunt.

Mr. Carter Davidson, the president of Siwash, on the other hand, is only thirty-three, but a grave young man in a new job and of the type to which life obviously is earnest and real; a meat-and-potatoes educator in a meat-and-potatoes environment. But this is no way to avoid the contrast and must be stopped lest both get sore, if they are not already, and long-word your correspondent to death at the city gate.

One trait or failing the two schools have in common—their weakness in football.

Siwash, up to a few years ago, had lost twenty-seven consecutive games, and in the last season of that dreary span did not score a point. The quarterback that year broke loose one day, and seemed on his way to a touch-down when he stepped in the water bucket.

Siwash did not regard this as evidence of intellectual superiority. Siwash wants to win. Chicago can imagine nothing of less consequence.

Red-Baiting

AT A LUNCH in Kansas City lately the speaker, a Mr. Collins, told of a man standing at a bar who tore out of the place and ran for home when a voice at the door cried, "McGuire, your house is on fire."

"He had run six blocks," Mr. Collins said, "before he suddenly dug his heels into the ground, skidded to a stop and said, 'Hell, my name isn't McGuire!'"

Mr. Collins was making the point that we are all slaves of habit in thought, and I use his story to open the question of red-baiting and ask why reds or Communists of various shades should enjoy an immunity which is not given the members of any other political faith and which the reds themselves allow to nobody who disagrees with them.

Why not bait reds? Out of sheer carelessness a superstition has been allowed to grow to the size of a robust principle that of all the political elements in this country the reds alone must be treated with special courtesy and that it is un-American and a mark of gross igno-

Red-Baiting

rance to criticize those whose sole purpose and constant effort is to install here the bloody terror of Moscow.

The favorite attack of the reds themselves, which they have made popular even with persons who are not reds but only want to be fair, is to assert that the red-baiter is a political bigot who recklessly flogs liberals and Socialists in his sweeping denunciations of the bolos.

I will grant that this has been known to happen, with the stipulation, however, that many liberals and Socialists keep very bad company and that many reds, wise in the uses of protective coloration, pretend to be liberals and Socialists. But, considering that the reds despise the liberal and Socialist, their concern for these elements obviously is false. Since when have they been so solicitous for liberals and Socialists? They bait liberals and Socialists themselves.

On the other hand, the reds are notoriously careless in their generalizations, for to them every one who is not a red, or pink enough to be useful as a decoy, is a Fascist. They violently abuse as Fascists many ordinary Democrats and Republicans whose detestation of Fascism is known to be as fierce as their hatred of the Moscow horror.

Yet, thanks to the American habit of accepting ideas without examination, they have enjoyed the benefit of a tradition that red-baiting is beneath the political chivalry of true Americans. Our papers, even the most conservative, often have uttered self-conscious denials

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

of any such intention when, in decent loyalty to their principles, they should have ripped and slashed the reds with the same loose-jointed abandon that the bolos use against all and sundry.

This inhibition dates back to the time of A. Mitchell Palmer, but should be overcome because it imposes an unnecessary handicap in a scuffle with an opponent who fights tomcat style and observes none of the ethics which he demands of others.

Chicago and Los Angeles, in *The Tribune* and *The Times*, respectively, possess two of the most intemperate and highly colored reactionary papers in the country, but these are models of calm and patient fairness by comparison with the least vicious of the red publications. The bolo editor has no financial responsibility to deter him from libel, and a sentence for criminal vilification would be martyrdom and thus a victory according to his peculiar system of scoring.

And direct controversy is avoided in respect for ex-Senator Jim Watson's quaint but indisputable dictum that nobody ever won a personal contest with a skunk. That is one reason why red-baiting should be avoided, but it is a purely personal and not very noble one, and it certainly is not binding on any one who wants to take the risk.

Herbert Hoover, Al Smith, Mr. Roosevelt, Jim Farley, William Green, Hearst, the duPonts, Tom Girdler and hundreds of other prominent men, the Elks,

Red-Baiting

Odd Fellows, Kiwanians and Kluxers, the Democrats, Republicans, Kansans and graduates of Princeton all may be criticized, denounced and derided and often are. Such being so, it is not only fair to bait reds but dishonest to treat them with special restraint.

Excelsior, Minn. I

YOU MAY think I am trying to be homespun, but I can remember where and when a child whose father or mother got drunk or even kept a case of beer in the cellar or a jug of rye in the cupboard was disgraced and sort of kept apart from the rest of the kids in the school yard.

The circumstances may have been rather special, because the three Protestant churches in town were running a local option campaign against the three saloons. One was kept by a quiet, respectable German named Ehrmantraut, who catered to the family trade, serving mostly nickel beers and liverwurst-on-rye. Another was attached to a drummers' hotel and was cited by the local preachers and the guest orators brought in by the W. C. T. U. as the living counterpart of the Sickie and Sheaf in "Ten Nights in a Barroom."

The third, run by a man named Hawkins, was the place where the sporting blood congregated at night. Mr. Hawkins' free lunch was supposed to be the best in town, and there was a superstition that his Negro chef

Excelsior, Minn. I

named Sandy, who wore one of those muffin-shaped white hats, would pay a kid two bits for soup turtles out of Mud Lake or Galpin's Lake.

As the dry campaign warmed up there came a great scandal in our town. It seemed that a couple of boys, maybe eighteen or nineteen years old and beyond school age, because there was no high school, got into an argument, and that one of the sports bought a barrel of beer and set it up in a quiet place of a Sunday afternoon, rallied the high-rollers, and turned the boys loose in a ring.

There was a Sunday closing law even under license, and, although the beer was sold on a Saturday, this incident was an outrageous profanation of the Sabbath, and there was all hell to pay when the news broke. It was just so much worse because it was claimed that the two young gladiators were plied with beer after the fight—their first false step, as the ministers said, and opportune proof that the perfidious brewers lost no opportunity to enslave and debauch the youth of our fair community.

The news spread around town that this one and that one—fathers, uncles and big brothers of some of the kids in school—had been suppeeniated to the county seat, and, though none of us quite knew what suppeeniation meant, we knew it was real bad.

The dries had all the luck that year. Their campaign stuff was very exciting and played to big crowds, because the only regular amusement—if you could call it regular

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

—was supplied by fly-by-night troupes of singers and card trick magicians who would open the Town Hall maybe once a month and do their stuff for 25 cents a head, children 15 cents.

The drys, however, gave us singers and magic lantern shows two or three nights a week for about a month. The songs were such as "Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight?" with slides showing a white-haired mother alone gazing at a baby shoe and a dissipated youth slumped over a table in a big-city hell-hole. They were a cinch to win the election, and, not that they needed any more material, just a couple of days before the vote some poor bum from down around the water tank, where the harvest hands waited for the freights, got locked up in the town jug for being drunk, set fire to the mattress, and strangled on the smoke. There was no attendant at the lockup, no faucet, or anything, and it was a terrible place to wake up hung over. But this poor man couldn't even get out of his cell to open a window, and by the time some one noticed smoke around the eaves he was all done.

The Reverend Mr. McKenzie, the Methodist minister, lived close by, and he movingly described the dying moments of this repentant sinner, some mother's son, who feebly turned his eyes to him and gasped, "Oh, Reverend, pray for me!" As Mr. McKenzie finished the dreadful story he dropped to his knees, and all present followed him in a prayer to Almighty God to be not

Excelsior, Minn. I

severe with this weak, penitent wanderer, to comfort his poor mother wherever she might be, and to deliver a substantial majority against license and our three saloons on election day.

The drys won about 6 to 1.

Excelsior, Minn. II

ON THE NIGHT that the three saloons were voted out of our little town, long before the Eighteenth Amendment, bonfires burned on the lot where the W. C. T. U. drinking fountain stood, and the Reverend Mr. McKenzie, the Methodist minister, thanked Almighty God that our youth would never know the taste of rum. Mr. Sampson, the victorious candidate for Mayor, broke the head out of a barrel of apples which he passed around to the adults in the Town Hall and provided a big wooden pail of grocery store candy for the kids. In other times it had been the custom of newly elected or re-elected mayors to lead a procession to one of the three saloons. But this was the beginning of a New Era.

Unhappily, in the heat of the campaign it had come to light that the few Catholics in town had no religious conviction against alcoholic beverages as such, and even held it to be no sin for a man or, yes, even a woman, to drink in moderation—even whisky. Holding liquor to be an abomination and the Demon Rum to be an actual devil, the Protestants, and particularly the Methodists,

Excelsior, Minn. II

felt that they had no choice but to regard the Catholics with suspicion, and the blessing of the referendum was mitigated somewhat by the answering resentment.

It had been established among the kids in the school-yard that any one whose father got drunk—the words “tight,” “plastered” and “cockeyed” were not then used in this sense—was a social inferior, and now, by exaggerated inference, not only the fathers but even the mothers of the Catholic kids were at least potential drunkards. It made a very unpleasant situation.

It seems strange now that they took their liquor evil of those days so grimly, because actually the social stigma of drunkenness, extending even to the children of the offender, was a strong deterrent.

My first knowledge of the problem of the drunken mother came in London, where ladies of the lower orders, forbidden to take their children into the pubs, after some futile protest, hit upon the idea of parking them outside, a dozen or more infants in charge of one little girl, while they spent the afternoon gnawing gin. It seemed awful at the time, but it was no different, really, from the present American practice of leaving the children at home in charge of the servants or in school and out of mischief while the ladies of the upper classes go pub crawling in the afternoon. No doubt about it, some of the girls do get thoroughly bottled when they go out larking, but there is nothing furtive about it, for they are just as likely to get tight at home in the presence of

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

the bairns. The daddies, too. And many of them are small-towners, too.

But, although this would have been horrible in our little town then, it is routine in our big cities now, and, I suppose, in our signal stops, too. I can't think of many children of my personal acquaintance who have not seen their fathers and mothers blotto now and again, but none of them ever seems to be humiliated. Amused, yes.

I believe there was an instinct to propitiate the future in my early sympathy for the poor bums in our town jug in the throes of hangover. It was a small brick jug with two cells and no water, and when the sun hit them in the morning the bums would begin to yell "Hoo-oo! Hoo-oo!" We lived near by, and I would put a board up against the outside wall and peer in the barred window at men with cracked, blue lips with white, salty crust on them, begging for something to drink—even water. I couldn't get a cup between the bars, but my mother also felt sorry for them, and she would tie a bottle of water to the end of a mop handle and, by stretching, I would shove it across the intervening space to the bars of the cell.

I have never gone back to our little town, and I wonder if, after all the struggle and prayer of the W. C. T. U. and the Reverend Mr. McKenzie to put alcohol forever from the sight of our youth, there are now red leather and chromium lady bars for mothers where the three saloons used to be.

Night Out

I WAS GOING to write some aggressive remarks about Communists and the C. I. O., but I think there might be much more interest in a straightaway account of a night out in New York.

Well, the War Department had been complaining that she never saw any shows any more and might as well be living in Grand Island or Billings, when down popped a pair for the opening of "Tortilla Flat." So we went and felt sorry for all concerned in the play, because, after all their effort and expense, it is just a pop fly and you could see in the faces of the actors that they were not deceived by the kind applause.

So after that we decided to go to the Stork Club and agreed that it was to be for just one. Sherman Billingsley got us a nice table and sat down for a minute.

I asked him if old Bleeding Heart Broun had been in, and he said, "No; not tonight," and I said I guessed the fat Mahatma probably had a chalkmark on his door these days on account of Sherman's trouble with some union waiters. Sherman said no, he was in good standing

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

with Broun, because the case was before the Labor Relations Board. The band was squawking away. A lot of Cuban or South American god-awfuls, one right after another, and the customers were out on the little floor circling and staring at one another in those Latin-American dances, like pit cocks sparring to strike.

Katharine Brush came in with a big guy named Hulburd, a *Saturday Evening Post* guy, and it turned out they had been at "Tortilla Flat," too, and thought about the same as we did.

Then, after a while, who comes ambling over but Broun with Connie, and they sit down, and I get to thinking how cockeyed this is for us to be dramming together when it is only a few hours since I took a belt at him in print in retaliation for a clout that he took at me a couple of days before. I suppose he is thinking the same thing. I know he hates my tripes politically, and I know it is mutual if not more so, but we never talk about such things, and I guess we are pretty good friends out of print. But, hell, I didn't start it. I was just running my peanut stand and minding my own business when he started yeiling "Pegler sells lousy peanuts!" What am I supposed to do? Boost his peanuts?

Billingsley remarked that Winchell was in the place, and I thought I would go and say hello, and he started talking about my income tax stories and did the revenue people ever bear down on me in revenge? I said no, my tossing around occurred before I started. That was how

Night Out

I happened to learn about this business of an agent walking in and acting like a prohibition agent in an old-time speak and about their opportunities to compromise cases for graft.

Then a little bloke sat down and said, "Hey, do you know a guy named Seltzer, the editor of *The Cleveland Press*?" It was Leonard Lyons, the Broadway columnist. "Because how about this? He cancels me out of his paper because he has got too much Broadway coverage and he keeps McIntyre!"

Well, that is kind of funny, because this little Lyons hustles ten big clubs and saloons every night, with a notebook, and, honestly, McIntyre still thinks 34th Street is 'way uptown.

Lyons never drinks, not even coffee, and he tells how when he gets home at 6 A.M. and says "Good night" the elevator man thinks he is drunk and how his baby is just waking up when he gets in and just being put down when he starts back to work at four in the afternoon—the gay life of a Broadway bon vivant.

Betty Lawford, the girl who takes the bath in "The Women," is there, and five cute little dolls—society, I suppose you could call them—surround a table for a thing I never heard of before—a girls' bachelor supper. One is getting married, and the others are going to be her handlers. This is her party for them. No blokes—all dolls.

The old Mahatma suggests that the orchestra play

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

"The Internationale," but it only plays some more Cuban. Billingsley sits over in a corner counting up, for it is now 4 A.M. and the War Department is jerking nods toward the door and wishing, by this time, that—no kidding—she did live in Grand Island or Billings.

By Me

MORRIS ERNST, the union labor lawyer, invites me to join a committee to preserve civil liberties in Jersey City. I am declining because of my last experience as a joiner. In that case I joined as one of the pure in heart for certain definite purposes, but when I went to purchase some nuts and a program we were voted into camp with the Communists and Anarchists of Spain and recorded in favor of the court packing plan and a radical political party to which I may have to pay contributions though I detest it.

Mr. Ernest says, and I agree, that when civil liberties are at stake the identity of the victim is unimportant, but it happens that the victims in Jersey City and vicinity have been, in the main, Communists and other politically pernicious individuals who would give much worse treatment than they got if they had the power.

They go to Jersey under the banner of Labor to work for the destruction of civil liberties and holler bloody murder on discovering that Mayor Frank Hague beat them to it years ago. Jealousy is their trouble.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

It is true that Hague is a dictator, but the Communists should be the last to squawk, because he is nowhere near as tough as their man Joe Stalin.

I see where their man Stalin has just cut eight more notches on his gunstock, which must look like a buck-saw by now, but Frank Hague hasn't any notches on his.

That is the point in my story where my sled begins to scrape raw ground, because I do hold that nobody has any right to suspend anybody's civil liberties. I so held at the time when Huey Long was murdering constitutional rights in Louisiana while the civil liberty crowd were all out seeing a man about a dog. In that case, however, it was ostensibly the smug and dirty rich who were getting their lumps, and the attitude of the civil liberties crowd was that the worst that could happen would be much too good for them.

From the characteristics of these recurrent inflammations about the strong-arm work of ill-taught and primitive police against people trained to taunt them into error, I have developed a suspicion that, contrary to Mr. Ernst's assurance, it does make a difference who is the victim and what his position is on certain matters.

Mr. Ernst says that in Jersey City peaceful picketing is interfered with, and this I will admit without argument to proceed to the question:

"When did Mr. Ernst or any one else in the civil liberties game get equally indignant over the violation

By Me

of any citizen's rights by non-peaceful or violent pickets?"

I mean the rights of regular employees, not strike-breakers, who were just contrary enough to stay at their jobs in defiance of orders from others to go out on strike. And, though it is almost a lynching offense to say so to an employer struck for rejecting outrageous demands and damaged by sabotage and rioting.

Mr. Ernst also complains that the owners of assembly halls in Jersey have been so intimidated that they are afraid to rent to certain unions, and this gives me to wonder when he became so fastidious about intimidation. I didn't know he cared, because right before his eyes in New York many Americans have suffered impairment of their rights through intimidation by radical strike promoters without his dashing into the fray in defense of principles, regardless of the identity of the individuals affected. I have gathered that, on the contrary, the civil liberty crowd regarded intimidation as a legitimate weapon against certain classes of individuals—a position with which I do not agree at all.

If I have correctly interpreted Mr. Ernst's enthusiasm by his activities, I am more liberal than he, for I would not exclude even Communists or Nazis from the protection of our laws and the enjoyment of our liberties, even though they invoke them only to work for their destruction. I don't see why the little brothers of Joe Stalin must always be moved ahead to the preferred

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

docket of public indignation. But that is a trade secret of the civil liberty crowd, which doesn't impair the fact that Hague, like Huey, is 'way out of line and needs Americanizing.

Heartburn

DRIVING FROM New York, N. Y., to Yale, at New Haven, for a football game on a recent Saturday A.M. and driving back again that night, your correspondent had an attack of conscience and vowed never again to belittle the boiled mutton, the boiled pudding, the bubble-and-squeak, the water-logged "sprouts," the toad-in-a-hole, the flaccid vegetable marrow, the steak-and-kidney horrors or the sodden black meat pies of the English nation as food too utterly, never to be adequately abhorred by persons of civilized taste.

Nowhere on the surface of this globe can there be any worse offense against the name of victual than the fare which is set forth to affront the hunger of the American highway traveller by the roadside clam parlors and hot doggeries, the chicken reels and ye old Southern waffle shoppes, the slightly more gaudy dine-and-dance resorts and the chain-store hotels which infest the concrete routes from place to place all over the U. S. A.

The crime against the human appetite is the worse because the United States is a land of gas and electric

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

ranges and plenty of food and altogether lavish conveniences. Does a traveller settle his weary hulk into a chair in Georgia, Florida, California, the great Northwest, the Central States or New England, his plight is the same. He is lured and betrayed by promises beyond the dreams of Lucullus and he finds himself revolted by culinary evils which would drive a starving jackal yipping and in a not very well condition from the outskirts of a municipal incinerator.

I will state that this matter is a rather personal one with me, who travel the pikes of this extravagant land a great many miles in the course of any given year (and thanks be for the job which enables me to do the same).

I have sampled (and only sampled) the famous Southern cooking of the Carolinas, Tennessee and Georgia and have found it to be more awful, if possible, than that of Vermont, Massachusetts, California and Illinois. If any American, going to England and finding himself in difficulties with the lukewarm putty which the English call food, is ever moved to criticize the English on that account, let him, in the name of fair play, and tact, imagine what atrocities would be slammed before him by some skinny, mildewed blonde with her mind on an impending date with a half-wit soda clerk or high school fullback, if he were to sit himself down at half past eight in the evening in any eating place in the U. S. A. outside half a dozen of the best hotels in the best cities.

Heartburn

The English food is bad enough to arouse and more than justify the passionate attacks which have been made upon it by indignant victims for several generations. It will be admitted that the English do not know what eating is. They do not dine, but only stoke. We have always regarded their food as the farthest south. But the American on tour does not even stoke. His submission to the food which confronts him is comparable to the helpless charity patient's weak, blind acceptance of medicine in the county hospital. It tastes awful, but it is said to be necessary.

It may be a rank gritty clam from the slop-jar water of Long Island Sound, as tender and tasteful as a golf ball which has been boiled in sand. It may be a mess of Southern greens, stringy and tepid and suggesting nothing so vividly as boiled mattress, or a Southern fried chicken, straight from Akron, Ohio, tire hatcheries with the pin feathers not quite scorched away and served upon a cold corrugated waffle which has been snipped from a blasting contractor's explosion mat. Or it may be, and probably will be, a gutta percha steak, scorched on the outside and still needing to be slugged smartly with a ketchup bottle to extinguish the life of the selling plater from whose living physique it must have been hewn not more than ten minutes before.

In that case it will be served along with seven or eight logs of French fried potatoes the size of railroad ties, cooked in liniment or roofing compound, and the waitress

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

will forget to bring the stained and sticky bottle of preservative or developing fluid which is supposed to annihilate the taste, until she had been asked for it at least three times. There will also be flies all over the place as big as turkeys, as noisy as transport planes and as persistent as press agents, and the management will have the effrontery to demand \$1.50 per head for all this under the description of "filet mignon avec pommes."

It may be only the skin of a toy balloon filled with the ground meat of the leavings of old chops and tendons, burnt to a cinder on the under side and served between the upper and nether layers of a pallid roll whose principal ingredient is not flour but plaster of Paris. This will be described, with hearty familiarity, as a hot dog. This is the worst offense of all against the American appetite, this hot dog whose vulgar shingle now violates the rural commonplaceness of ten million frontages between Carnarsie and Sausalito.

How the baseball and football players ever manage to stay alive, much less to thrive on their long travels, in the course of which they subsist entirely upon such debris, is more than any dietitian would care to consider. But at least they may be said to be in training and therefore stouter than the millions of casual travellers who subject themselves to these gastronomic terrors in the course of a year and not only survive but seem never to know that they have been wronged.

Heartburn

The food that is wasted in the United States every year as unfit for human consumption, by travellers who nevertheless pay high for it and regard themselves lucky not to have been compelled by some law to eat it all up, would feed all the hungry people in the entire country if it could be saved from the vandal hands of the public cooks in the little cities and towns.

Bold Jerry O'Connell

GOOD MORNING, Mrs. Dorsey, and did yez read the fearless speech that brave, bold Congressman Jerry O'Connell, of Montana, didn't deliver in Journal Square in Jersey City? You didn't? My! My! Mrs. Dorsey, that was a regular Parnell of a speech.

No, he didn't make the speech, Mrs. Dorsey. He was going to make it and he gave out advance copies of it like, you know, the way they do in Congress when they speak three minutes and then print 5000 words of patriotism, wit, humor and philosophy in *The Congressional Record*.

It seems, Mrs. Dorsey, that there was a crowd hanging around Journal Square so Congressman Jerry O'Connell didn't make the speech. Most statesmen like crowds to hear their speeches, but Jerry is bashful, so when he heard this crowd was there he went back to Washington instead and the papers printed the speech.

"Our forefathers," he was going to say, "were willing to lay down their lives that Liberty and Democracy

Bold Jerry O'Connell

might live. They accomplished their vision by setting up a form of government and a nation which is today the mightiest and greatest under God's heaven.

"That form of government," he didn't say, Mrs. Dorsey, "has been preserved because men have been willing to sacrifice even their lives. Tonight I am awfully happy and proud," he was going to continue, Mrs. Dorsey, "to come to Jersey City and raise my voice in protest against the most despicable and disgraceful dictatorship that exists within this nation of ours. Tonight I am happy and proud that I come here to denounce a man whose name is so despicable that it poisons my tongue to utter it."

I dunno, Mrs. Dorsey, maybe it was the night air in Jersey City that caused him to keep a still tongue in his head. It is very bad air, Mrs. Dorsey, and likely to cause throat trouble. Or maybe Jerry didn't want to poison his tongue. They were saying that a lot of hoodlums were waiting with rubber hoses in Journal Square, but that couldn't have been the reason Jerry didn't deliver his speech, because you can see right here where he was going to say, "I am happy and proud that, despite all threats against me, I have come here to speak against a man who, instead of holding high office, should be confined in the penitentiary at hard labor."

That was telling them, Mrs. Dorsey. I mean it was writing them a letter, anyway.

"I have been reliably informed," he didn't yell with a

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

defiant glare at the crowd, "that some silly, simple, idiotic people were going to run me out of town with two-foot rubber hoses. That did not scare me, because it was nothing new to me. I come from a city where, as a small boy, I saw men who were fighting for what is now the fundamental law of this land, beaten and maimed in body and mind, murdered in cold blood by simple, selfish, greedy men. Yes," he was going to say, "I have seen men make sacrifices that liberty might live, that labor might organize.

"And I say here tonight," he was going to add, Mrs. Dorsey, "to the Kellys and Brophys and all of that ilk"—ilk he was going to call them, Mrs. Dorsey—"ilk who dance like little puppets when their lord and master pulls the strings, I say to them that you can bring on your two-foot rubber hoses, your thugs and your gunmen, but if I can bring democracy to Jersey City, if I can bring this city of yours back into the American Union and destroy an administration so corrupt, so un-American, so undemocratic, the worst that ever blackened the reputation of a decent and self-respecting people, I assure you that I am willing to pay the price."

So you can see, Mrs. Dorsey, Jerry O'Connell was ready for anything. It was a very daring, defiant challenge that he was going to fling right into the very maw—you know, mush, Mrs. Dorsey—of the foul specter of dictatorship skulking around the taproots of the sacred

Bold Jerry O'Connell

escutcheon of liberty and fattening on the very well-springs of Valley Forge.

It was the defiantest speech that you and I never heard in many a long day, Mrs. Dorsey.

Full Crew

THEY WERE doing a big business the other night in Chez Capone, the swank rendezvous of people who really matter, when suddenly a man left the bar, walked back to the orchestra, interrupted the music and said to the leader:—"Hey, wait a minute! Hold still a minute!"

"Well, what's with you?" the leader demanded.

"Nothing's with me," said the man. "I'm all right. I'm strictly all right, friend, but what's with that drummer of yours?"

"Nothing is with that drummer. He has got a card. He is union. Show him your card, Wallie."

The drummer showed his card.

"Drummer's card," said the man. "All right for drumming the snare drum. But what's he doing socking that brass? You got to put on another man to sock that."

"A whole guy we got to put on just to sock that brass?"

"You heard me, and I got a guy outside."

Mr. Chez Capone, the proprietor, thought fast and

Full Crew

decided to put on the extra man to sock the brass thing rather than have pickets around the plant, and maybe have his waiters jerked out in the midst of a big night's business.

So the sock-brass guy climbed into the stand, the agent of the musicians went back to the bar and things resumed.

A few minutes later the agent's ears went up, lifting his hat two inches off his head. He strode back to the orchestra again shouting, "Now what's with that drummer?"

"I tell you nothing is with that drummer," the leader said. "He didn't sock that brass. Your sock-brass guy done it. Hey, didden' you sock that brass gag?"

"Who said anything about brass?" the agent yelled. "That drummer whanged that triangle. Why haven't you got a triangle-whanger in your line-up?"

"You mean I got to have a whole guy just to whang that dinky little triangle a few times a night? To hell with it! Wallie, don't whang that gag no more. We will just cut it out of the orchestra."

"You do and we jerk you out of here so fast you trample yourself in the rush," the guy said. "You will use a full crew or no crew."

So the agent put a triangle-whanger up on the stand, and things went along all right until the agent heard a couple of those Cuban gourds with the birdshot in them. It was the drummer in dutch again. His card didn't per-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

mit him to shake those gourds, and the agent wouldn't leave till they put on another guy. The orchestra platform was getting crowded, and it was still more crowded when the agent caught the drummer kicking the trap for the big drum, and put in a big drum trap-kicker to do that.

Well, as the night wore on the agent made life more and more miserable for the leader and Mr. Chez Capone. He put on a guy to play hoofbeats with the cocoanuts, a guy to play the block and another one to swish that wire egg-beater thing. He put in another to play the sandpaper thing, and still another to clank the cowbell—all jobs formerly performed by the drummer in his spare time. He put in a man to play the boat whistle and another to blow the rubber raspberry gag, and every time the poor drummer would reach for one of his accustomed gags to give it a little sock or twirl or blow the agent would shove through the Chez Capone, bouncing the customers around to put another hand to work.

The orchestra overflowed the platform and spread all over the dance floor and up and down the room, and all but eight were new hands brought in by the agent to assist the drummer under the full-crew rules of the union.

Ordinarily the Chez Capone doesn't close until 4 A.M., but at a quarter of one Mr. Chez Capone took a look around the plant and clapped his hands.

"All right," he said; "turn up the tables and turn out the lights. We got a full crew at the drums but no room

Full Crew

left for customers. Here's the key and here's the license and the lease, and here's my regards to the union," with which he seized the raspberry gag from the raspberry gag player and blew a long and vulgar note.

Cumshaw

THE OBJECTIONS to Mr. Roosevelt's decision to become a professional journalist on the side, although they do have a ring of honest shock, seem to call for reconsideration of the terms of employment governing this job. It would then be found that the President violates nothing more important than some people's taste and that he might exploit his office for personal gain in many other honorable ways which have not even occurred to him, or, if so, have been rejected for one reason or another, ethical or practical.

The protests are based on tradition, but tradition is not legal and binding, and there is nothing in the contract which would forbid a really enterprising Chief Executive to install turnstiles at the White House doors and charge a modest admission fee, to sell autographs and indorsements, to charge a high price for fireside chats under commercial sponsorship or to start a news agency of his own with an exclusive right to sell the information which is now given free at White House press conferences and sold, at considerable profit, by those to whom it is given.

I recall no exact precedent for the installation of turnstiles or the sale of autographs, but our Presidents, and particularly Roosevelts and Democrats, are noted for their preference for new ones of their own making.

As to the sale of indorsements, however, an American President could cite the example of Her Majesty Queen Marie of Rumania, who released a testimonial accompanied by her photograph in a rather saintly costume, and to the British royal custom of issuing citations from the King to his personal purveyors of bloater paste, underwear, whisky and tyres. To be sure, the British monarch does not sell these indorsements, but that is a small difference which certainly would be fully compensated by the implied reaffirmation of the profit motive in this country.

William Jennings Bryan as Secretary of State, an office which is commonly regarded as second only to the Presidency, fought for and, by sheer persistency and loyal appreciation of money, established the principle that it is all right for a high official of the government to deliver speeches for hire on his own time, using the prestige and box-office power of his official position for all they are worth at the gate.

And the method by which news is disseminated at the Vatican, although slightly different in detail, could be invoked in justification of a decision to classify news as a White House perquisite.

Mr. Hoffman, the Michigan Representative—a Re-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

publican, of course, and therefore likely to be a man of bias—seems not to have considered the facts of the situation in objecting to Mr. Roosevelt's venture in journalism. If he had given calm thought to the matter he must have realized that this country long ago accepted the proposition that honest pickings are the due of those who occupy distinguished positions among us.

It was so held long ago in the case of the heavy-weight championship of the world—the fairest bauble in fistiana's realm, as it is often called—whose successive incumbents all have written voluminously and with no suggestion from the side lines that they are degrading an office which, for a certain period in the '20s, seemed to outrank the Presidency itself.

It may be pointed out, too, that in a country whose cry is "Democracy and More Democracy" the President were less than democratic should he impose on his own conduct restrictions which are not accepted by statesmen of lesser degree. Thus, if it be right and ethical for Congressmen to employ their own relatives as secretaries and to place them in other government positions as Congressmen surely do, then a truly democratic President would seem a great snob were he to refrain from providing jobs for members of his family in the public service. Mr. Roosevelt may cite his own record in refutation of any charge of snobbery on this score.

To turn once more to a great sister democracy for guidance, it may be observed that the entire British

royal family are provided with palaces and appropriate incomes—a system which obviates any temptation to accept jobs as lobbyists or to use aggressive methods of salesmanship on firms desiring to stand well with the government.

There are some jobs which are worth so much in pickings that men serve without pay and actually pay to be hired. Waiters in certain restaurants have been known to do that. But, of course, no President would be asked to work for pickings alone.

The dignity of the office must be maintained.

The Devil's Work

I NEVER THOUGHT I would have a good word to say for Satan, who is a thoroughly bad character and does not live right, but it comes over me that he provides more employment than Henry Ford and the WPA combined and gets nothing but abuse for his reward.

Going back to my earliest acquaintance with Satan, I recall being told by our school teacher that Satan was the inventor of the cigarette. The cigarette was comparatively rare in our part of the country in those days, but many earnest ladies and pious old gentlemen made a fair living going from school to school warning the kiddies that if they smoked cigarettes they might meet a fate which was, to their way of thinking, worse than death.

They had charts which they hung above the blackboards, like the map of South America, showing the evolution of a boy into a chimney and placards depicting the moral decline of the addict. In one of those placards there there was a bright-eyed, shiny-faced

The Devil's Work

boy eagerly running an errand for his mother and a drowsy, untidy little bum with circles under his eyes and a cigarette dangling from his under lip just leaning against the window of a saloon, too lazy to run any errands for anybody.

That was more than thirty years ago, and since then, what with war, the emancipation of woman and all, the cigarette production in our country alone has run into the hundreds of billions. The habit has spread all over the world. The little handful of earnest ladies and pious old gentlemen were practically the only ones who made any time out of the devil's new invention in those days, but today actually millions of people are employed in the cigarette trade.

If you were to abolish the cigarette abruptly you would create a situation almost as bad as a World War combined with a famine. Great areas of our own country would be stricken as if by the terrible wrath of God. Planters, pickers, packers, machine hands, mechanics, printers, box-makers, tinfoil and cellophane workers, shipping hands, warehouse people, retail personnel and advertising men would be tossed into the streets by thousands.

You would have to include all other tobacco products along with the cigarettes, because the doctors all say tobacco is as bad in one form as in another, and that would mean the end of all jobs dependent on the tobacco industry.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

The suffering would be awful in the advertising field, because the big cigarette firms spend so much that a man I know quite well is rich on the commission from just one account.

I think the commission is 15 per cent, and my friend has four homes in widely separated parts of the country and a big transport plane in which to hop from one to another. Of course, he would have to sell some of those homes and ground the ship. The pilot and the servants and gardeners and all would lose their jobs.

That old devil Satan took a lot of us off the street when he developed the tobacco industry, with particular preference to the cigarette division, and his invention of alcoholic beverages, helped at least as much. And now we find ourselves so dependent on those habits that we do not dare forswear them for fear that the disorder and suffering would be worse than the vices themselves.

We must thank Satan in the name of the legal profession, too, because if all men were honest and deaf to the larcenous promptings and vengeful mutterings of old Mr. Satan there would be very little work for lawyers. In fact, if Satan were not on the job there would be very few men of the legal temperament, and, of course, the cops and G-men would all be on the town, as we say.

Our journalism would be a dull and stuffy institution

The Devil's Work

without any news of divorce or crime inspired by Satan, and much of the medical practice of our doctors would never occur, because so many of the ills that flesh is heir to are directly traceable to intemperance or other moral error.

Strictly speaking, we must give Satan credit for the employment of millions of men in the soldiering business throughout the world, because for every soldier under the banners of God and the right there is an enemy in Satan's service. We learned about this in the war to end war.

We know that if Satan's soldiers would disperse the soldiers of righteousness would gladly disband, too, but the devil's soldiers never disarm. Thus it is Satan who keeps both forces always in uniform and out of the breadlines and keeps the munitions workers busy and the tailors making uniforms and so on, far down the line.

But for Satan there would be very little employment for clergymen to save our souls, and, taking one consideration with another, I am inclined to give the devil his due.

For Argument's Sake

WHEN I WAS writing baseball we had in the American League an umpire named Bill Guthrie, who had a bulldog jaw, whom the athletes, with their famous knack for unflattering nicknames, called Dogface Guthrie. Mr. Guthrie loved controversy, preferably physical, but he had a kind heart and a deep, personal admiration for Mickey Cochrane, who was then catching for Connie Mack in Philadelphia.

One day late in one of those seasons when Connie was winning his last batch of pennants the White Sox limped into Philadelphia, dragging themselves around the league for the last time in a contest for eighth place, a distinction which they finally won from the Red Sox by the margin of half a game. The weather was terribly hot, and Mr. Cochrane, after a very hard season, was weary and sluggish. Mr. Guthrie, being large and stout and cumbered with the heavy armor of his trade, felt sorry for Mike, and, in loyalty to the American League, wanted to spare him needless exertion so that he could be as fresh as possible for the impending world series.

For Argument's Sake

With these feelings in his heart, he erred on the side of generosity when the Philadelphia pitcher, in the ninth inning, threw one right through Mike's listless hands which rolled about ten yards and stopped. Mike whirled wearily and was starting after the ball when Mr. Guthrie flipped a fresh ball out of his pocket and said, "Let it go, Mike. Here's a clean one."

The White Sox had a runner on first at the moment, but were about eight runs behind with two men out. In these circumstances, Mr. Guthrie was startled by a shriek from the third base coach's box. It was Mr. Donie Bush, the manager of the White Sox, yelling to his runner to go down to second.

Mr. Guthrie waved the runner back, but the man proceeded, nevertheless, and when he had doubtfully rounded the bag Mr. Bush, from third, with frantic motions, commanded him to continue.

"Go on back," Mr. Guthrie bawled, "that ball is dead."

"Come on around," Mr. Bush squawked to his runner. "That ball ain't dead. That ball is in play." His runner rounded third and Mr. Bush sent him charging home, where Mr. Cochrane stood at the plate and tagged him with the fresh one.

"Now he's out," said Mr. Guthrie.

"He ain't out," Mr. Bush bawled. "He scores."

At this point the other two umpires, George Moriarty and Big Shot McGowan, strolled in to confer pri-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

vately with Mr. Guthrie, who plainly had booted one.

"Bill," Mr. Moriarty whispered to his colleague, "that ball ain't dead. We have got to do something."

"Oh," said Mr. Guthrie, "it's too hot for Mike to go chasing that ball, just before the world series. He is a great little guy and he is all in. What's the difference, anyway? Those bums are way behind, with two men gone, but you would think Donie was fighting for a pennant. Put the mug back on base and leave us get through."

"Yes," said Mr. McGowan, "but what base are we going to put him on? We got four bases. Anyway, now you have called him out on a play at the plate. That was no play."

"Oh, cut it in half and put him on second," said Mr. Guthrie, and this was done, with Mr. Bush, of the White Sox, yipping and bouncing and vowing to protest the game.

It ended a few minutes later in the customary defeat of the White Sox, and as the players finished dressing and straggled out, Mr. Bush, somewhat calmer by now, met Dogface under the stand.

"Bill," he said, "I am not going to protest the game. But right is right, and I want you to admit you kicked one. That's all I ask. Just let me win the argument."

Mr. Guthrie shook his head.

"That ball," he said, "was dead."

For Argument's Sake

In a more recent controversy I share the position and emotions of Mr. Bush.

I claim that it is unethical for sons of a President of the United States to have profitable dealings with corporations which are beholden to whimsical political bureaus of the government for valuable rights and favors, and still more unethical for a President to take into the White House and confer great personal influence on a young man whose sense of propriety is such as that.

I am not going to protest or try to start impeachment proceedings. Like Donie Bush, I just want to win my argument.

In Sickness and in Health
Until Further Notice

I WILL HAVE to see my pastor or my actuary—probably my actuary—about a problem which has been raised by a recent historical event involving a king.

The king loved a lady who had loved two other males to a serious degree, and the boss-parson of the kingdom took the position that the king should not make her queen because that would seem to indorse to the people the proposition that each human being had a right to at least three lawful mates. I do not like the word “mate” in this connection, because it suggests a sort of thing with which all farm-raised people are familiar and seems to low-rate the beautiful mystery of love. But the word “lover” is equally undignified, and I think I will solve this little kink by skipping on to the next paragraph.

I am in no need of telling that divorce is a legal institution in this country, as sound as the chattel mort-

In Sickness and in Health Until Further Notice

gage and the principle of collective bargaining. I know, too, that it is a dreadful thing for man and wife to live together when the sands of the desert are cold, because that is practically the same as something which I would prefer not to mention in mixed company.

I will mention, however, a suspicion that divorce often is the resort of persons who have reached a time of life known as the dangerous age and who would be better off if they would just realize that these throes, like some earlier crises, are just a part of the experience of life, and probably occurred in the lives of their sainted great-grandparents.

Dreadful as it may be for man and woman to continue to live together when the fire appears to be definitely out, it has been even more dreadful in certain conspicuous cases for him and her to go romancing around at an advanced age making notorious chumps of themselves before a public which knows precisely what is going on. We have always before us in this country of cafeteria-courts, where the decrees are kept on the warming-table, middle-aged ladies and gentlemen, usually persons of prominence, whose grown or school-wise adolescent children have pleaded with them, for heaven's sake, to hold still another year or two, because the crisis will surely pass, and they may then go down the hill hand-in-hand to the sunset and so forth.

But the problem which I want to present to my actuary has to do with the enormous confusion which

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

seems likely to ensue if we take as a standard the career of a lady who has two ex-husbands living and apply that to all of us. Suppose every man and woman has a right to two divorces and that every man and woman takes advantage of that right. I might go so far as to take five for a figure, because we do have some prominent parties in our civilized Christian world who marry a fifth time with four former mates—that word begins to seem more appropriate now—still alive.

I will go so far as to suppose also that each of these ladies presents to each of her three husbands no fewer than two bundles from heaven and that each husband, in the legal nature of things, becomes responsible for the education, maintenance and medical care of his own bundles. And that these bundles, in turn, must sort themselves out somehow, trying to avoid too close a degree of kinship and mate and get divorced and so on. So, then, each woman has three husbands and each man three wives and each of them six children, and even if you start with the original cast of the problem you discover that the possibilities are infinite and the perplexities too large and rapid for any one but my actuary—who is a fictitious character, anyway. There would be eighteen children, and if you had ever seen me going over an expense account trying to put in \$15.08 for a fare and chair between New York and Washington to absorb a discrepancy when the price is only \$8

In Sickness and in Health Until Further Notice

and something, you would realize where this problem leaves me.

I do not wish to propose arbitrary restrictions on poor troubled souls in search of happiness, and the answer to it all. But it is plain that if each of us got a ticket at birth entitling bearer to a certain number of divorces, like a meat ticket in wartime, and used it to the full, the result would be, to use a political word, chaos.

The fathers would be spending too much of their time visiting their children on days appointed by the court, and the current husbands would be staying home from the office to see that the ex-husbands didn't try to impose on old acquaintance. It has been done.

I think it would be just plain hell, and I haven't carried the problem beyond the third degree. And the expense of the court clerk's office for the handling of the alimony and the bookkeeping and the you're-anothering and the fighting and the killing when the ex-husbands pass pitying remarks to the current incumbents!

I wish I hadn't brought up the subject, but I think regular polygamy would be better.

When to Shoot

TO THE PROFESSIONAL military officer there is no duty more terrible than that of ordering his troops to fire on unarmed civilians, his fellow citizens, in time of insurrection. If he orders his men to shoot any one who crosses a deadline previously made known to the crowd the dead and wounded are likely to be more or less innocent individuals in the front rank who were shoved across the line by pressure from the rear.

They may even include women and children, for it is the studied, ruthless purpose of those who promote such disturbances to put authority on the spot and exploit the humane instincts of the soldiers for their own advantage.

If, on the other hand, the officer fails to carry out a warning to shoot those who cross the line, the mob begins to doubt that he will fire at all, and the front ranks press closer and closer to the soldiers.

If, finally, they are permitted to come close enough to grab the men's rifles the officer has lost the initia-

When to Shoot

tive and must then be responsible for anything that happens in a general rough-and-tumble. In this event the casualties are likely to be much worse than they would have been if he had executed his threat in the first place.

The theory of the deadline is that although it necessitates some bloodshed, it is actually humane and economical. The officer has a duty to his troops not to expose them to needless casualties by irresolution and must remember also that if he falters in a crisis he betrays the authority which he is supposed to personify and uphold.

But he is damned if he does and damned if he doesn't, and all officers dread the thought of such duty. The propaganda power of a half-dozen dead civilians, including, perhaps a woman or a child, exceeds that of a hundred soldiers beaten to death in a fight which could have been averted, and the officer, though he might escape hanging, would go down in history as a monster. Nevertheless, he has no option to refuse duty or perform it half-heartedly because of personal reluctance. The commander-in-chief, however, passes the buck in putting it up to him to decide the precise time to use force and how much force to use. The commander-in-chief is a politician. If the officer permits the situation to get away from him and result in a greater disturbance requiring greater force, there again he is to blame.

Some militia commanders send their men out for duty

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

in civilian disorders without ammunition, and for the sake of their personal popularity in the community let the fact be known. This is dangerous, because the mob leaders, who usually lead from the rear, will assure the crowd that there is nothing to fear from the rifles and that, anyway, the soldiers are their own kind of people and would shoot over their heads even if they did have ammunition.

But professional officers, trained to use military force if necessary, disagree with the practice of exposing their soldiers to attacks inspired by the knowledge that the rifles are unloaded or the understanding that the fire will amount to nothing more than noise. The theory here is that troops should be armed to fight if necessary and should not be invoked at all unless the situation has passed beyond the control of the civil authorities. Then, usually, the trouble can be subdued by the presence of armed men and the frank understanding that they will shoot to kill if martial law is challenged.

This is a shocking topic, to be sure, but one which constitutes an actual professional problem of the soldier, the more unpleasant in the last few years because of the tendency of State governors to call out the militia in trivial causes. Huey Long called out the troops half a dozen times under conditions in which shooting would have constituted political massacre. A Governor of Colorado used the militia to repel immigration of itinerant beetfield hands whose only offense was

When to Shoot

a desire to engage in backbreaking toil at starvation wages. And, more recently, in Rhode Island, Governor Quinn used the militia to close a race track because the manager of the track had called him a liar in print.

There was nothing in any of these situations which would have justified military action, which is to say killing, and, that being so, there was no excuse for calling out the soldiers.

Hugo Bloh's Job-Trust

I HAVE BEEN having a good laugh over the plight of Hugo Bloh, that smart operator who moved in quietly and started buying up jobs back in 1937, when Labor finally put over the proposition that a job is property. Hugo had a little money at the time, and he began with a couple of itinerants working in a paper box factory in Jersey City who were fixing to quit, anyway, and go somewhere else. They didn't know that they had any property right in their jobs, so, naturally, when Hugo offered them three dollars each they took it and thought he was crazy.

But Hugo drew up bills of sale, and next day when the boss of the plant was about to pick two new men out of the line at the gate Hugo showed up with the documents and said, "Just a minute, Brother. Those jobs are my property."

The boss was half-crazy, anyway, from people with government badges coming around and telling him what he couldn't do, so he backed away, and Hugo rented the

Hugo Bloh's Job-Trust

jobs to a couple of hungry workmen at the rate of a dollar a week each. The boss had to hire them. Operating around factory gates, Hugo soon had several hundred jobs in hand, and business was growing so fast that he opened an office and hired a lawyer, although before doing that he made the attorney sign over the job to him.

Then the attorney got looking through the new laws from Washington and decided that Hugo ought to register his property in the county seat wherever the jobs were situated.

From that point on business just pyramided. Hugo hired scouts who would tip him off whenever some man or woman was about to quit or had been fired or laid off for any reason. The people had heard that jobs were property, but they didn't put much stock in the idea, because they weren't used to it.

Hugo would offer a dollar or two, and to a person who was about to quit or lose out, anyway, that was just so much velvet. In no time he had ten thousand jobs rented out at from one to three dollars a week, and from that he went on to a hundred thousand, and eventually to more than two million jobs, scattered all over the country. He had offices in all the big cities, and, owing to a peculiarity of the labor laws supporting the property right of a man who owned a job, he had the government on his side.

The Department of Labor didn't like the idea, but

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

Hugo's lawyer went down to Washington and showed them in the book where the jobs were the property of the one who owned them, no matter how many jobs he had. The government was bound to protect this property right, so the Department of Labor had to establish a check-off system in thousands of plants to collect the job rent every pay day from the lessees of Hugo's jobs and turn the money over to Hugo.

In 1942 Hugo paid the greatest income tax in history and bought the old Rockefeller place at Tarrytown for a country home. He bought a yacht so big that even the lifeboats carried lifeboats, and got married and divorced three times in a year. And when he went to the races he would bet so much in the mutuels that the odds would just vanish, and he would take down less than his own tax, even when he won, owing to the deduction of the percentage.

Then it happened. Some little counter hopper working in one of Hugo's rented jobs was reading law at night school, and one night he happened to wonder if Hugo paid any property tax on all those jobs. Hugo had paid his income taxes all right, but the counter hopper discovered that the property tax had never been paid. Hugo tried to bluff him, then buy him in, but the counter hopper was sore and wouldn't do business. So all over the country the assessors and collectors moved in on Hugo, and now he is indicted in fifty different places, and sure to get plenty of years, because

Hugo Bloh's Job-Trust

it never occurred to him that private property has to pay taxes, even if it's jobs.

And, funniest part of it all, the government moved in, paid all these local taxes and took over the jobs. So here we are now in Mr. Roosevelt's fourth term, with practically all the private jobs in the country turned over to the Job Department, under Jim Farley, at a rental of from 50 cents to \$20 a week.

You don't own a job now. You rent it from the U. S. A., and, my God, how the money rolls in!

I Never Knew—

I HAVE NEVER met a colored man named Rufus, Pompey, Rastus or Sambo or a colored woman named Mandy or Chloe or an Englishman named Algernon or Montmorency or a farmer named Si Perkins or Si anything. Neither have I known personally or even known of the existence of a farmer's wife or daughter or any one else named Samantha. Nor a butler named Jenkins.

The only Perkins I have known in recent years, with the exception of the Secretary of Labor, called Muddom Perkins, whom I have met only in print—to our, no doubt, mutual loss—is the old catcher of Connie Mack's Philadelphia Athletics, now coaching for the Detroit Tigers. But his square name is Ralph, and he never was any sort of farmer, being a Glosterman or, anyway, a Cape Codder. He was called Cy on the sport pages for the same reason that all players named Walter who become famous at all are called Sir Walter—such as Sir Walter Johnson and Sir Walter Hagen. For the same reason all well-known players by the name of

I Never Knew—

Krouse or Krause are called Buck, and lots of men, in and out of sports, named McGovern are called Terry.

I could explain the reason, but it would run into a great deal of wordage, so let us skip it.

Cy Perkins was one of the best ball players I ever saw, and he can't be ranked any worse than first in the gentlemanliness and sportsmanship columns, either, but I don't want to get out of character, so I will not dwell on his virtues either as a person or as a competitor. But once, when he was the best catcher in the world, playing along year after year with the worst club in the world, I asked him if the obviousness of the nickname Si didn't make him sick, and he said, "No!" because it sort of disguised him.

He said his home folks didn't know he was catching a lot of barefoot slingers for Connie Mack but thought he had a respectable job playing piano in a you-know (wink) house.

That one was old even then.

Well, and I never knew an office boy who telephoned the boss on the opening day of the baseball season to say that his grandmother was dead, although a lot of the little pests would lay off now and again during the season and report next day that they had been sick when everybody knew they had been at some ball game or maybe just bumming around the five-and-ten, which was much more seductive to office boys

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

than the ball park but never received proper recognition in the native lore of the country.

And I never have known a kid in my own youth or since who raided a jam pot and got caught in the pantry by his mother or any one else and tried to plead not guilty, with the evidence smeared all over his face, as depicted in more funny papers than I can begin to guess. I doubt that any kid ever did that, but I want to set a statute of limitations against that time before the existence of the corner candy store and the cheap little smitches of candy.

Perhaps it is true that half a century ago kids went for jam in the raw, and it may be that the kids of those days actually practiced the device of sticking a shingle down inside their pants to stifle the blow of the strap, which was supposed to hang behind the door or above the kitchen range, or somewhere. There weren't any dumb fathers and mothers in our part of the country. They would have known, and, anyway, there was never any of that formal "get over my knee and get spanked" business.

When they lost temper they would haul off and clout you a couple over the head or give you a smack of the hand across the porch, just impromptu, and that was bad enough, although the roaring and threatening were worse.

And I never knew a husband to phone home that he wouldn't be there to dinner because he had to sit up with

I Never Knew—

a sick friend, or a wife to throw a rolling pin, or a bridegroom to kick up a row because the bride's pie didn't compare with that which his mother used to make, or a cop who said "Begorra" or flirted with a nursemaid by the name of Norah.

Did you?

Maybe we don't get around enough—eh, pal?

Bashful James

I SHOULD LIKE to indorse Colonel Frank Knox's advice to any self-respecting editor to tell Senator Minton and his lobby committee to go to hell. But I am already committed to the attitude that, inasmuch as the committee has been harassing persons who are said to have lobbied against the administration, the inquiry should now deal similarly with those mysterious messengers, claiming White House authority, who lobbied for the Reorganization Bill and for other administration measures.

First of all on that list it should summon Jimmy Roosevelt, who was reported to have given private assurances to certain interests that they need not fear that the bill, if passed, would be applied to their detriment. And, inasmuch as the President himself specifically authorized the examination of the income tax returns of witnesses brought before the committee, Jimmy's own returns, particularly those for the period between his father's election and his own induction into an influential office in the White House, should be examined and broken down.

Bashful James

It should be established whether Jimmy did important business with corporations and individuals whose interests were so placed that they might have suffered or prospered by any decision of any government bureau having to do with permits or privileges, such as liquor interests and radio interests. And, in justice to Jimmy himself, who, it is to be hoped, would prove himself innocent of such dealings, the executives of such corporations and such individuals also should be called to give an account of their dealings, if any, under the authority of such government agencies.

I have heard such inquisitiveness rebuked as an attempt to strike at the President through the conduct of members of his family. That criticism leaves me puzzled, because it seems to imply that a detailed examination of Jimmy's income tax returns would disclose material which might be used to the President's detriment. I cannot agree with this assumption, preferring to believe that there has been nothing questionable or unethical in Jimmy's business affairs and that he would be able to prove that there wasn't.

This talk of an attempt to strike at the President through a member of his family appears to me to convict Jimmy without a hearing and to bespeak a determination to cover up conduct which might embarrass the President. What kind of honesty is that? Obviously, if Jimmy's business dealings have been innocent of pressure or the exploitation of the great pop-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

ular mandate, as it has been called, no revelation of the details could cause his father any political or personal discomfort. And certainly there is no less reason to examine Jimmy's income tax returns than those of other persons, hostile to the New Deal, who were able to vindicate themselves.

As to whether Jimmy could be regarded as a lobbyist I see no doubt. Washington is full of lobbyists. The most spontaneous argument or mere discussion of a pending issue between a citizen and a statesman or a bureau man in which the citizen attempts to press his views on the other may be regarded as lobbying.

Men and women lobby in the cocktail room and the dining room of the Mayflower Hotel, at parties and dinners and, indeed, in the White House. I have seen in the President's private office Mr. Charlie Michelson, who holds, or did hold at my last information on the subject, a commission from a big radio company. I have to remark that there are many corporations which would wish to place a representative in the White House with latchkey privileges and that at least one citizen questions the propriety of this.

This lobby committee is within its rights so far as I can see, but I don't see that it has shown any intention to exercise the same rights in the direction of other lobbyists who, in consistency, should be called.

Moreover, although it may violate a house rule of the most exclusive gentlemen's club in the world, as

Bashful James

the Senate has been called, this committee can't acquit itself of witch-burning until it calls up every member of the Senate to tell under oath who lobbied him for, as well as against, the bill and what promises and threats were uttered, and by whom, to induce him to vote for it.

I wouldn't tell the committee to go to hell.

I would say:—"Get Jimmy Roosevelt in here with his income tax returns and put him over the same jumps that you are trying to put me over. I'll take any jump he'll take."

Jimmy seems to be our first bashful Roosevelt.

Lament

EVERY MAN to his own fun, but I once took a little whirl at that deep sea, or dipsey, fishing, as they call it, and if there are any of those St. Bernard or Great Dane fish allotted to me in those waters down off Florida Mr. Roosevelt may have them. I got caught up on that kind of fishing for all time in the space of about three days several years ago. We went out in a couple of little party boats and all the way down to the fishing place Charlie Canny, the press agent for Henry Doherty's hotels, was telling us about the fish we were going to catch. We were going after tarpon, for choice, but the water was supposed to be absolutely reeking of all kinds of fish with queer names like dace, mace, place, roach, poach, gudgeon, mullet, grommet, and shovel-nosed duebills.

The guides, who also were to do the cooking, which consisted of opening cans and fixing the bacon and coffee, were Florida Conchs, pronounced Conks. That is the name of the people who live along the keys. In no time they got to arguing whether the shark was more

Lament

dangerous than the barracuda. One said he would slap a shark in the face but couldn't be bribed to go overboard where barracuda were about. The other one said just the opposite. They always do. It is an act.

We got to the place, anchored in the barley water beside a channel, rigged up a lot of tackle with hooks the size of those on which they hang half-cows in butcher shops, and went out trolling in small launches. The sun was fierce. We trolled for several hours in the morning, came back, had some beans and coffee, trolled all afternoon and came back to bed down in little bunks. We didn't catch any fish but Charlie said they would probably be running next day.

They weren't, or the third day, either. By that time we dudes, or tourists, in the party were burned as red as fire engines and the mosquitoes were coming out in absolute clouds. Jimmy Pergola, that nice little newsreel man who was killed on a safety flight for one of the big air lines out West, said one mosquito bit a hunk out of him and flew up a tree to eat it, but dropped it in the water with a big splash while whetting its bill on a limb.

"And a shark came up and snagged it," Jimmy said. "Don't tell me sharks don't eat man meat."

Charlie did catch a little shark about four feet long on a small rod one night and it wrestled him all over the dory.

He flopped among the seats, got tangled up in a

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

lot of rope and fish line, fell on his face, skinned up his nose, elbows and shins and looked like a preliminary boy by the time one of the Conchs reached over the side, grabbed the shark with his hands, slit it along the keel with the bread knife and tossed it back in the water.

"That ought to chum up some grown-up sharks," he said. This one had half-killed our pal and it was only a fingerling.

I don't know; maybe it's just me. Other people catch fish, but I never can. I like to fish for trouts and basses in little streams and lakes, but I never catch any. A fellow named Woods will go down to the stream near my house and catch a dozen or so most any time, but all I ever got was a turtle, and generally I just leave my flies, hooks and leaders snagged on the branches.

I can't play golf, either. I started trying fifteen years ago, and you would think I would be getting hot by now. But I am worse than ever. I have had dozens of lessons, and from good instructors, too. Pull in your neck, keep your ears well apart, swivel on your back spin, turn your hand further over. Nuts. If I haul off and give it, the ball does an outcurve and comes back like a boomerang.

If I baby it to prevent the hook, it goes pt-pt-pt three yards and stops, and the dolls sitting on the verandah laugh shrilly. After three strokes I am still on my own goal line and have to punt. Some days I

Lament

can sock all right, but those days I can't hit irons or putt. It is a terrible way to be. I have broken a hundred only once. Everybody beats me, even women and cartoonists.

When I was a kid I was a punk ball player. I liked to, but I just wasn't any good. Football the same. Skating the same.

I play a little poker, but I always lose. Same story. Always. Win a few cheap pots with straight flushes early in the evening and get knocked in the crick on big pots toward closing time with aces up against three lousy deuces.

I try to live right and follow the instructions, but it never makes any difference. Maybe this is what makes me so mean.

Spirit of Chicago

MANY AN earnest and learned brow has puckered in solemn study of the state of mind which is Chicago and failed to express the civic philosophy of the people as well as Frank Zintak stated it during his trial on a charge of embezzling \$10,500 of public funds.

Mr. Zintak is a typical Chicago public official, a minor politician who became clerk of the Superior Court.

In the course of the trial the following dialogue occurred:—

Question:—"Whose check was that?"

Answer (by Mr. Zintak):—"That's what I say if you would only let this go until tomorrow there would be nothing to it, because here's the idea, even if it is on record, you are stirring up something that probably will be worse in the political line than anything, because I represent the largest group of people in Chicago.

"They have all the faith in the world in me for things I done squarely, because there was not any-

Spirit of Chicago

thing we done in politics that we did not do it in accord with what those people wished. Some of the people may think there shouldn't be something like groups, but there will be Polish groups and maybe others as long as we exist, for the simple reason that fraternal organizations they encourage youth to belong to them, and the only way they can do that is by keeping that spirit up, because they are insurance groups and they would diminish if they did not."

Mr. Zintak was vindicated and made restitution, and public opinion has held him blameless, because the community was absolutely convinced by the defense that he did not take the money for himself, but gave it to charities and advanced it to other politicians, including at least one judge. Afterward there was a bit of a scandal over the fact that some of the jurors, when they were taken out for the air at night in custody of court officers, were entertained in night clubs, where the attractions included liquor, dancing and slot machines.

But the community bears Mr. Zintak no ill will, and his conduct in a position of public trust is not popularly deplored, because the morality and mentality of the city as a whole are the morality and mentality of Mr. Zintak. He is not only typical of the public service but typical of the city as well. He is Mr. Chicago himself, and he doubtless would have been stunned by a verdict of guilty—the more so after the vindication of Governor Len Small, who organized

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

a dummy bank to facilitate his retention of the interest on public funds intrusted to him, and of Robert M. Sweitzer, the County Clerk who admitted a shortage of \$350,000.

The amount of interest involved in Governor Small's case was estimated at \$1,500,000, and in the case of Mr. Sweitzer the shortage was placed at \$414,000 by the prosecution.

Mr. Sweitzer's defense was that it would have been a compromise with honor to turn back to his successor a dollar more or a dollar less than the exact amount due and that the accounting by which the prosecution arrived at the figure of \$414,000 was inexact. This inexactness was attributed to the confused condition of his books, and the jury returned Mr. Sweitzer to his loved ones and friends unsullied of honor on this ground and the representation of his counsel that the law was old and archaic, notwithstanding the State's rejoinder that the law against stealing went back to the tablets of Sinai.

The judge instructed the jury that a retiring County Clerk by law must surrender to his successor all books and money and all interest fees of the office, but the jury held with Mr. Sweitzer that he could not possibly turn over the money if there was doubt as to the amount, and accepted his own declaration that he would make restitution as soon as the amount was fixed compatibly with

Spirit of Chicago

his honor. He is still willing to do this, but the amount has not yet been fixed to his satisfaction.

The case, therefore, has been put away in the dead file and in the envelopes in the newspaper morgues along with those of Governor Small and Mr. Zintak, whose quaint and somewhat incoherent soliloquy precisely expressed the people's sentiments on government and the morality and responsibility of public officials.

*Six of One, Half Dozen
of the Other*

ALL BELIEVERS in democracy naturally loathe Mussolini, Hitler and all that they represent, but there should be a sort of Jim Crow rule to segregate Communists who would attempt to join us in this pleasure. They have special reasons for their hatred, quite different from those of people who believe in freedom. After all, the Communists were responsible for these horrors, and it isn't the atrocities which they deplore but the fact that they aren't in charge of the terror. They are sore because one set of tough guys in Italy and another set in Germany finally decided that they would rather die than submit to any more kicking around and went into the streets to fight the Bolos according to their own rough-and-tumble rules. The record book shows that in each case the Communists took an awful shellacking.

But they had gone around asking for it, murdering patriots, wrecking, mobbing, bombing, terrorizing and

Six of One . . .

showing their muscle until a long-suffering Popeye reached inside his blouse for his can of spinach, cranked up the Sunday punch and let them have it square on the button.

Mussolini's hoodlums crowded them with castor oil until it ran out their ears, sometimes in cocktail form, mixed with kerosene, and, whether they took it neat or half-and-half, the results usually were fatal in a very dreadful and humiliating way. This method of execution or assassination, though unique and ribald, was no more final or painful, however, than some of the standard practices by which the Communists had wiped out nobody knows how many hundred thousand political heretics in Russia and which they were using in their post-war missionary work among the Italians and the downhearted Heinies.

They were very cocky and took no back talk from the natives when they were out in front, and it was only when the home crowd took the play away and began to run them up alleys that they appreciated the horrors of the concentration camps and appealed to the sucker liberals of the world to witness what dirt was being done. But their own prisons weren't country clubs, and if Fascists and Nazis carried things to bloody extremes, as nobody doubts they did and do, they have been no more savage than the Communists had been or would be in this country tomorrow if they held the dice.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

They cut their initials in both countries, however, for when it came time to fight, Fascists and Nazis adopted their methods and ethics and thus degraded themselves to the level which they had thought to escape. They abolished freedom of the press and thought and speech, and became bold, bland, cantankerous liars and double-crossers to whom no perfidy was too rotten for the achievement of any purpose, and no pledge or treaty was worth the ink on the paper. They withdrew from civilization to start something which they thought was new but which was merely a reversion to vices that intelligent races hoped they had outgrown until the Communists revived them.

Fascists and Nazis, taught by their experience with the Communists, obtain American citizenship with their fingers crossed and with hatred of American principles in their hearts, and invoke their rights to strut their loyalty to murderous dictators in the guise of good-will groups.

Likewise our Communists, imported and domestic, demand the protection of the hated and abused police and of a government whose destruction is their purpose when they go out to demonstrate against that government.

Both are a political burden to any candidate whom they afflict with their indorsement, and the C. I. O.'s worst handicap is its unscrupulous, if unwelcome, element of Communists who see in a unified command of

Six of One . . .

three million workmen, properly exploited, an army of riot and oppression.

Cause and effect, equally brutal and ruthless, equally intolerant, cynical and hostile to American belief, they call on democracy to witness and punish the atrocities which they have inflicted on one another. The point to remember amid their clamor is that they are six of one and a half-dozen of the other and that because they are practically alike one healthy democratic loathing will cover both.

*Cook Sprained Thumb; Wildflowers;
Day Off; None Dead*

LAST SUMMER George Spelvin decided to get away from it all and therefore rented a little place in the country and moved up, taking along Emma, the colored woman who fluffs up the pillows and runs the vacuum and does the cooking in the Spelvins' love nest in town, to do the same up there. They had a good time, slept well to the music of the crickets, saw several rabbits and, they hope, a deer, although it might have been a neighbor's great dane, and returned to town fit for the fray, as Dale Carnegie might say.

There had been no mishap to mar their enjoyment of the woods and fields except one almost forgotten incident last July when Emma, on her day off, went out to gather some wild flowers, slipped on a rock, grabbed a maple sapling to save herself from falling, and sprained her thumb. It hurt a little that night, so Mr. Spelvin drove her over to the doctor, who gave her a bag of pills which she was to take every hour on the hour. If not relieved

Cook Sprained Thumb

she was to return for an X-ray. The thumb was no worse next day, but it was still sore, so Mr. Spelvin thought it would be a wise precaution to have the X-ray to see if it was broken. It wasn't broken, however—just sprained—and the bill was \$5 for the pills and \$8 for the X-ray, which he paid.

Neither Emma nor the Spelvins gave it another thought until a short time before Thanksgiving, when Mr. Spelvin received a large and formidable official form from the State Industrial Commission and a letter calling him to time for failure to report an industrial accident on his place. The form had dozens of blanks to be filled in. What was the nature of the industry? Were there any unprotected saws, belts or lathes in his plant, what kind of explosives were used in his business, and was he properly licensed to use the same, if any? Was there any emergency hospital on his premises and was there a physician in constant or periodic attendance or on call, and was there a registered nurse on full time? On the day of the mishap to Emma he had failed to make proper notification to the Department of Labor, a neglect of which the Commission was inclined to take a rather serious view, and would he see Section G, Paragraph 4, Sub-section (A), relating to penalties for failure to comply with the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act? What was the cause of the accident on his premises? Structural defect? Mechanical breakdown? Explosion? Were all the injured given immediate

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

first aid? Had any lives been lost or limbs blown, torn or lopped off, and where had Mr. Spelvin buried his dead, if any?

Mr. Spelvin saw that there was a little misapprehension and, after consulting Emma, who had completely forgotten her sprained thumb, threw aside the form and wrote the Commission a letter, stating, in effect, "Cook sprained thumb picking wild flowers on day off. No explosion. No fire. No dead."

Other forms arrived and Mr. Spelvin ignored them until a couple of weeks ago, when he received a rather nasty letter and another form.

This time Mr. Spelvin lost his temper and wrote in enormous printed letters on the form in that space reserved for general remarks:—"Cook sprained thumb picking wild flowers on day off."

He thought he had been rather clever in his sarcasm, but last week there comes to him another communication from the Commission. He is summoned to appear at a hearing at 10 A.M. in Room 1,322 of the Labor Department, bringing all pertinent books, papers and records and all witnesses to the disaster at his plant last July, failing which he will be subject to prosecution and, on conviction, to a heavy fine and long imprisonment.

At this point Mr. Spelvin thought he would call up somebody, so he looked in the telephone book, got the number of the Commission, and told the girl on the switchboard that he wanted to discuss an industrial

Cook Sprained Thumb

accident with some one who had sufficient grasp and authority to advise him well. She said, "Wait a minute," and presently a man's voice said, "Hello. What's your trouble?"

"My cook," said Mr. Spelvin. "Last summer she sprained her thumb picking wild flowers on her day off. No explosives. No lathes or unprotected saws. Just wild flowers on her day off. Slipped and sprained her thumb. Now I am summoned to a hearing with all books, papers and records and witnesses. Can you advise me?"

"Oh, don't pay no attention to it," the man said.

"But they say I can be fined and imprisoned," Mr. Spelvin said.

"Don't pay no attention," said the man. "It's only a matter of form. Just don't pay it no attention. Just ignore it. It's, you know, it's the law, like."

Farewell to Mencken (1936)

THIS HAS been a pretty grim campaign, but it can't be said that Henry Mencken has failed us in a dark hour. For years we looked to Mr. Mencken for our laughs and, though there was a savage quality in his humor, he lightened the curse of prohibition and even found nonsense in the solemn brutality of the Borgias of the Methodist Board of Prohibition and Public Morals.

Now we discover Mr. Mencken staggering down the street under the unwieldy weight of an enormous Landon banner, a sunflower in his lapel as big as a four-passenger omelette, a white ribbon on his sleeve and Mabel Walker Willebrandt on his arm. Mr. Mencken has come out for Mr. Landon and, though he attempts to make certain reservations, there is no such thing as a little bit of Landon. You take all of him as you let him alone, and when Mr. Mencken takes the gentleman from Kansas he must also take Prohibition and even Herbert Hoover whom he once denounced as a fat Coolidge.

Farewell to Mencken (1936)

It would be hard for any humorist to conceive a more hilarious scene, but then, Mr. Mencken is a master and when he sets out to be funny we don't expect any one to top his gags. Al Smith and Herbert campaigning in the same holy cause; Al Smith on the same team with Bill White, of Kansas, who once accused him of political connivance at vice; Al Smith singing out of the same hymnbook with William Randolph Hearst, of whom he once said, "I know the color of his liver and it is white"—all this is highly ludicrous and a relief from the fury of the campaign. But Mr. Mencken was no politician and has never been under that pressure which makes for those political revisions of principle which always made politicians contemptible to him.

Father Coughlin, born of that stock which long cried persecution and fought for religious freedom, co-operating with the remnants of the Ku Klux Klan and talking anti-Semitism, is a weird figure in the parade of nightmare creatures of the current fight. But we had no background on Coughlin and as far as the man himself is concerned, his present is not inconsistent with his past, for he didn't have any previous political existence.

Mr. Mencken, however, was committed against everything that Mr. Landon represents from the bumbling pomposity and dumb arrogance of the Old Deal to honorary college degrees and lodge buttons. He was not so much a crusader as the mischievous brat of the whole

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

American neighborhood. A crusader does his enemies the honor of taking them seriously and fighting them with earnest mirthlessness, but Henry Mencken's method was to kick them in the pants when they were bent over tying their shoe and they were always tying their shoe.

Nobody ever got so much fun out of ridiculing the very people and principles whom he has now joined like a convert twitching down the sawdust aisle of one of Billy Sunday's old revivals and though he claims to retain certain of his old heresies it is plain that a good man has weakened at last, and for no specified cause. It could hardly be a fear for his possessions because Henry is a fellow who never did crowd himself to make all the money he could and even today if he would play that typewriter instead of sitting around discussing liver trouble with a lot of doctors from Johns Hopkins he could make more money than even Mr. Roosevelt's bailiffs could snatch away.

Maybe, as one who contributed more than any other individual to the deflation of public authority and American institutions, Mr. Mencken now looks on his work, observes that the rabble has taken literally his contempt for human and divine discipline and is afraid the mob will come marching up his street, busting windows indiscriminately and slugging everybody with a well-fed appearance such as his.

I expect to read soon that Mr. Mencken has joined the Shriners and the Elks and I hope to be present to

Farewell to Mencken (1936)

cover the story when he joins the Tennessee fundamentalists and is totally immersed in Goose Crick wearing a white night shirt and blubbering "Hallelujah, Brother" between plunges in the cleansing flood.

Listen Who's Talking

WELL, FOR gossakes, Gussie, will you notice who is beefing about evasion and avoidance of the income tax? If it isn't our old friend, Mr. Roosevelt, who has been getting his civilized society at a cut-rate ever since 1929, and getting it at a time when people in much lower brackets are paying not only the full rate but something extra on account of the panic and the necessities of deserving Democrats and all.

Mr. Roosevelt was Governor of New York at \$25,000 a year from 1929 to 1933. In addition to this pay the Governor of New York gets a house, and his \$25,000 a year is exempt from the federal tax, while other people earning much less and paying their own house rent have to look Mr. Whiskers in the eye and drop something on the drum to pay for their civilization. As President, Mr. Roosevelt now gets \$75,000 a year and free use of a big, furnished house with large gardens, lovely view and plenty of closet room. He also gets \$25,000 a year for his travel expenses, and whenever he wants to go out and catch a fish by the upper lip or cruise to Honolulu, he just telephones some Admiral to gas up a cruiser and

Listen Who's Talking

bring it around to the dock. There is his incorporated yacht, free, unless, possibly, he slips a little folding money under his plate to pay his mess bill.

He also gets plenty of expensive cars and chauffeurs for himself and guests, personal and official. If you got \$75,000 a year and a house from some private employer the Treasury would give you a terrible wrestle over the proposition that your personal use of the house should be reckoned as income on a rental basis, and clip you for a tax on the same. Your personal and social use of the cars and chauffeurs would be computed and taxed, too. They would also make you prove that you spent every penny of your \$25,000 travel allowance on legitimate, official travel and not on trips to your country home or your vacation resort, and tax as income every dollar which was not spent in calling on the trade strictly in the line of business.

And, if you got fresh, they might rule that your employer was paying you too much and make him reduce your pay. You didn't know they could do that, did you? Well, brother, they can and they have done it. You better be careful how you talk.

Mr. Roosevelt now pays his Federal share of the cost of civilized society, but he is on the complimentary list in New York State, of which he is a resident enjoying rather special service from the local civilization on his visits home while lesser fellow citizens pay the State income tax.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

I seem to personalize the issue, but that is only because Mr. Roosevelt poked the finger of scorn at people who take advantage of their rights under the law, but overlooked that enormous class of very well paid cut-rate passengers on the ship of state of which he is a conspicuous member.

True, he complied with the law, but it is only a technicality with a faint color of legality which gives him certain exemptions, and he was complaining of the immorality of other people who take advantage of technicalities, which appear to have the color of legality, wasn't he?

Hors d'Œuvres

MAURY MAVERICK, the Texas Congressman, can have my support in his campaign against hors d'œuvres, but only if he includes the entire array of ghastly inedibles as well as the name itself. Hors d'œuvres are hard enough to pronounce, but the proof of the outrage is in the eating, and the Texas statesman, if he has any honest feeling for his fellow-man, can't consider his duty done merely by changing their name to dingle-doo.

Hors d'œuvres by any other name are still a scourge, and as they occur almost exclusively at cocktail parties Mr. Maverick might wisely extend his front and move to abolish the cocktail party, too.

These twin abominations are a holdover from the prohibition era, when people gathered in the afternoon to protest against the foul amendment and stayed on far into the night, boring one another with pointless anecdotes and reminiscences of golf, the war and Goldman-Sachs. Repeal abolished the reason for the existence of the cocktail party, and it now lives on borrowed, not to say stolen, time, an awful proceeding causing bilious-

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

ness, marital misadventure, contusions and abrasions, late hours and loud talk.

Not for years has any one willingly gone to a cocktail party, and the institution needs only a slight push to destroy it and set men free. Abolish the cocktail party and you will be relieved to note the simultaneous disappearance of the cheese stick, the bowls of salted peanuts and popcorn, the stuffed olive wrapped in bacon and impaled on a wobbly toothpick, the deadly coils of the anchovy, the horrible dabs of red caviar in sour cream, the quarter sections of leathery antipasto and all the hundred evil little smears of deviled paste on brittle crust which cracks in the fingers and drops goo on the necktie.

Abolish the cocktail party and you will disperse all that uneasy company of mutually suspicious strangers who meet through mumbled introductions and never catch the names and then roam around, lost, friendless and forlorn, looking for a familiar face—if only that of an old and well-detested enemy.

It is the worst trial in life, the cocktail party, comparable in its loneliness to a child's first day at school but worse because there is always a chance that the person who says, "How do you like this weather?" may be the weather man or his wife. Or that the one who says, "Do you like Ben Bernie?" is Ben Bernie or his wife.

I have met several men named Cohen at cocktail parties, always wary, lest there should be some special Cohen among them. Then, lately, dropping my guard,

Hors d'Œuvres

I met another Mr. Cohen at cocktails and was on the point of uttering some small talk about gents' ready-to-wear when Nicholas Murray Butler, or it might have been Bishop Manning, said: "P-s-s-st! You fool! That is Octavus Roy Cohen—*Saturday Evening Post*." How was I to know?

They ought to wear labels at cocktail parties as the Rotarians do, and at the moving picture cocktail parties wear their salary figures, too.

There was some point to the cocktail party and the deadly hors d'œuvres in prohibition time. Strangers we may have been to one another individually, but comrades we were in something which was, to borrow a phrase from the Klux, a sacred, unfailing bond of rebellion. Any man who acquired a pint, quart or case, whether of house paint, disinfectant or silo liquor, felt an obligation to share his good luck with as many kindred souls as he could oblige with what he had.

So he issued his invitations to the most obstreperous rebels he knew without regard for their compatibility on any other subject but their one, obvious mutual interest.

They came arunning and athirsting, male and female, and of all ages and occupations, and when the cocktail hour was over they were walking up the walls and making clandestine dates, sometimes with their own wives and husbands. And, of course, they had to lay in a little stokage and dunkage to absorb their poison, and that

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

was where the hors d'œuvres entered our social life.

It comes to me that the best way to avoid hors d'œuvres is to stay away from the cocktail party and that the one certain way to destroy them both is to do it over and over.

And how do you suppose Congressman Maverick was driven to the protest point regarding hors d'œuvres if he had been living the cloistered life becoming a Texas statesman? Is his interest personal or only academic? In his protest he seemed to speak as one who had suffered.

That's How Spelvin Was Born

FROM TIME to time these living, human documents have tried to record the mixed ruminations, and prejudices and the bafflement of the Average American, using for his name George Spelvin. Several correspondents, including a drama critic who was covering one of the haymow theatres of the summer circuit in New Hampshire, were good enough to report that they had discovered Mr. Spelvin himself at work in the drama in various places and to suggest that it was unwise to attribute such thoughts to an actual person who might hold decided views to the contrary. George Spelvin should be explained.

Mr. Spelvin has played more rôles than any other actor that ever lived, and, though he has usually performed acceptably and sometimes with distinction, he is the only ham of his grade and ability who has never been invited to fall in with the rest of the cast and take his bends at the fall of the curtain. His passing, soon

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

to occur, will be unnoticed even by his colleagues of the stage and nobody will realize that he has gone until, perhaps years later, some one remarks, "I wonder what-ever became of George Spelvin." Sentimentalists though they are, the men and women who paint their faces, dress up in fancy clothes and give recitations and sing and dance will send not so much as a card to his kin or a sprig to his bier.

George Spelvin made his debut in a minor part in "Brewster's Millions," and there was a time when he was appearing in five Broadway productions at once. John Golden, the producer of many plays goes back to the beginning on George.

It was Eddie Abeles who invented Mr. Spelvin, Mr. Golden recalls out of a memory of the theatre as long as an Englishman's shirt and as cluttered as a rat's nest with odd bits of reminiscent information. Spelvin was an imaginary character, to whom Eddie Abeles attributed all blame for everything that went wrong and all gossip and rumor. He was Mr. Abeles' personal John Doe, and, scorning the popularly accepted form of "I hear" or "they tell me," Mr. Abeles would attribute the most scurrilous hearsay to George Spelvin.

In "Brewster's Millions" there was an actor cast for two parts who naturally wanted to use his own name for the better one, and it was Abeles, the star, who, when they came to make up the program, proposed the name of his confidential wraith for the minor rôle. Mr. Golden

That's How Spelvin Was Born

doesn't recall the name of the mimic who first used this hardy alias, but he does recollect that Jack Devereaux, the juvenile, after ten weeks of rehearsal, returned an answer to Fred Thompson, the producer, which was of some weight when, years afterward, the Actors' Equity placed a limitation on the period of rehearsal without pay.

"You read that part like an old man," said Thompson. "I thought you were a juvenile," to which Devereaux replied, "I was when we started rehearsals."

In later years, Mr. Golden, out of slightly superstitious respect for the success of "Brewster's Millions," made a point of using George Spelvin's name on the programs of "No. 6," "Washington Square," "Turn to the Right," "Lightnin'," "Three Wise Fools," "Seventh Heaven" and "The First Year" for the secondary rôle of the actor who doubled. And it is his belief that if any artist has a special claim to the name it would be Mr. Jimmy Lane, who also was George Spelvin in a succession of Golden plays over several years. Other producers adopted Spelvin, however, and he often appeared simultaneously not only in several Broadway houses but in theatres on the road, hundreds of miles apart.

George Spelvin's career is waning now, undone by his own versatility and accumulating fame. The customers are getting onto him and, of all things, resent him as a deceiver in a world of make-believe.

Dear Sir—You Cur

AS ONE who has opened many bushels of Dear-sir-you-cur letters from constant readers I am able to say that the American citizen takes his politics much more grievously than his football and his heavyweight champions. This testimony should tend to refute an old charge that the people of the republic are grim about non-essentials but frivolous toward things that matter, and therefore deserve what they get in public affairs.

Most of the men who were writing football in the heyday of Knute Rockne will agree that there was nothing like the fury of the honorary or downtown alumni of Notre Dame University, a breed of old grad who had no standing on the rolls but followed the team in person or in print and finally embarrassed the good fathers in charge by the fire of their devotion. Like Adolf Hitler, the Austrian who is more furiously German than Ludendorff himself, these naturalized Notre Dames suffered from the knowledge that they were men of alien

Dear Sir— You Cur

origin and from a futile longing to legitimize themselves.

Their passion for the team, for Knute and the glorious name of the old school which never could be truly theirs was wilder, louder and much more belligerent than that of the true alumni with diplomas at home, and when they wrote fan letters to the football experts they began with words which they could easily pronounce but could not always spell, and warmed up from that point. By the time they reached the second page they were giving smoke, lava and ash, and it was a curious thing about them that they resented praise almost as bitterly as doubt. The trouble with praise usually was that it wasn't lavish enough, but even when it was lavish they would sometimes write in to demand "Who are you to praise Notre Dame? Mind your own business, you bum!"

The actual Notre Dames were quite restrained. Accustomed to the tributes of the press, they took them in their stride, and if now and again the affairs of the team or Rockne's extra-curricular interests invited a gentle doubt they took that with dignity, too.

There were some vigorous Vox Pops among the Stanfords and Southern Californias, and the Princetons and Yales were somewhat touchy, too. The Harvards, on the other hand, were a hard-shell crowd, who didn't care what the papers said and pretended not to read them.

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

Maybe they couldn't. Anyway, a fan letter from a Harvard man for or against a football expert was something like Big Casino, and I never drew one.

And, of course, when Tunney and Dempsey were doing civic uplift work for Philadelphia and Chicago in the era of wonderful nonsense America was divided into two camps—the Tunney lovers, who were right-minded and easily annoyed, and the Youse Guys, who always thought you were sneering at the champ.

I thought I received some little gems of pure vituperation from those who love our native games, but experience in the field of political comment has taught me to regard them all as mash notes, sealed with a kiss, so to speak. They told me when I took this job that the American people were apathetic toward their politics and masters and that the fan mail would be scanty and dull by comparison with the correspondence on the sport side.

Do you suppose they could have been playing a joke? For I find not only more letters in the bag these days but dirtier ones by far than ever called a football scribe to order for his errors, and often detect an extremely personal note. I have been called Horse Face and Dog Face and other names inappropriate for home circulation, and frequent repetition of a word ending in "ouse" has robbed it of its original force. I think the most stimulating correspondence came from those selfless patriots who were willing to quit work and live on

Dear Sir— You Cur

their parents' pensions under the Townsend Plan, thus releasing their jobs to persons who have no parents eligible for the grant. All I said was that this was a terrible injustice to the great, pathetic body of adult American orphans who had no parents to draw pensions. But the response was prompt and harsh. I believe it was the first time any one ever was denounced for sympathizing with orphans, and it just goes to show how easily one may tread on the toes of great patriotic groups without the slightest intention to give offense.

Long ago in my home town the weekly papers carried little ads reading:—"Get lots of mail, free of charge. Just send your name to Dept. M-16, Box 623, Chicago." These people furnished names for sucker lists to mail order firms, and the gents and ladies around our post office in the evening would draw out great sheafs of circulars and letters in praise of electric belts, toothache gum, concrete silos, hog feed, novelty jewelry and magic tricks with which to furnish a little fun, sport and amusement for one's friends on social evenings.

I sent my name in and, true to the promise in the ad, got lots of mail. But that was different. That mail always started "Dear Sir or Madam," never with Horse Face, Dog Face or that word ending in "ouse."

Success

THERE WAS a gentle, kind old man stopping at the inn on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico a few days ago who somehow looked familiar and turned out to be Harry Daugherty, the Attorney General and tough guy of the Warren G. Harding Presidency. Time had changed Mr. Daugherty. He was seventy-six years old now and softened up by the blows of personal and political tragedy. His wife had died after twenty-eight years of invalidism; his son, Draper, the pride and hope of his younger days, had died some years ago, and of course the smash and scandal of the Harding administration had left scars even on the cast-iron hide of a man who was more furiously hated by more personal enemies, I suppose, than any other American since Thad Stevens.

I once was assigned to follow Mr. Daugherty to Miami and wherever else he might go at a time when there was some thought that he might jump the country and hole up in some banana port to avoid examination as a witness in certain phases of the Ohio regime in Washington.

Success

Knowing that Mrs. Daugherty was very sick, and wanting not to be a nuisance, I proposed to her husband after several days' surveillance that we make a deal. I was to let him alone and he promised to tell me in good time when he was leaving and where he was going. A week later he telephoned me at my room in Miami that he was going back to Washington that night, and that was all there was to it.

But the old man chuckled as we sat in the dark on the front porch at the thought of a reporter trailing an Attorney General of the United States who had William J. Burns and his department fly cops doing the same to many worthy citizens. Mr. Daugherty had J. Edgar Hoover, too, and Gaston Means, the foulest crook, at a rough estimate, that this country has ever produced.

Mr. Daugherty has been blind in one eye and deaf in one ear for many years, and now his good eye and ear are none too good, but good enough, at that, says he, to see and hear the little good that there is in the world. He lives almost altogether in the past now, in the company of men who have died since the Ohio crowd went whooping into Washington with Prohibition and Wayne Wheeler.

In his time he ripped and slashed for power and came on to be the personal boss of a President of the United States, so it was a little comic that night when the pretty young mother with the little boy planned to go to the movies and the old-time tyrant told her to run right

Dissenting Opinions of Westbrook Pegler

along and not worry, for he, Harry Daugherty, personally would sit up in the rocker in the dark at the foot of the little boy's bed and watch over him.

I mean no wrong to Mr. Daugherty when I say that irresistibly I was reminded of Damon Runyon's story of the retired safe blower and the kid, called "Butch Minds the Baby." Mr. Daugherty said the little boy looked just like his boy Draper at the same age, and that he would like to sit in the dark and rock and cover him if he stirred or get him a drink—or anything.

Next day Karl Bickel came over—Bickel, the ex-president of the United Press, who batted around the world for years and years and clawed his way to the top in tough competition, and then suddenly chucked it to retire to a drowsy, sunny little town 'way down the Florida Gulf Coast and putter in little interests such as the Cabana Club and Doc Halton's Free Clinic for the sallow children of the pure Anglo-Saxon backwoods crackers.

It costs \$5 overhead to detach a cracker child from his or her adenoids and tonsils and free the patient of hookworm, and the doctor, whose services are tossed in free, is now working on his last batch in the entire county, a group of twenty.

Mr. Daugherty and Mr. Bickel sometimes sat in the sun, two retired guys who had been so fierce and fast in action so short a time ago, talking like Noah and the hero of the Johnstown flood, of times gone past. And

Success

there was a man in the placid little community who went about leading a soft-eyed gentle old greyhound on a leash.

"Nice dog you have there," Mr. Bickel said. "Is he a racing dog?"

"He was," the man said. "He was a racing dog. His name is Smiles. He was a very good, fast dog, but one night he caught the rabbit. After that they lose interest. They discover that the thing they have been chasing so hard is just a phony, and they just lie down in the box and watch the other dogs run, like saying, 'Go ahead and run yourselves ragged for a mess of hair and sawdust!' "

Both Mr. Daugherty and Mr. Bickel took a liking to Smiles, and he would stretch out in some shady spot, sigh deeply and go to sleep.

80340

MILLS COLLEGE LIBRARY



3 3086 00163 2488

818

80340

P376d

